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Notes of the Week

THE pro-coalition Press has surpassed its town bright record during the present week. The journal that makes a hobby of chronicling the "wobbles" of others has itself grievously wobbled. Throughout the election crisis it has been at pains to tell Conservatives not to vote for Mr. Baldwin (indeed, as we noted last week, it has tacitly told them not to vote at all, for no party subscribes to its hat-doffing policy); on Tuesday morning its harassed readers were definitely advised to vote Liberal; on Wednesday morning these orders were, if not countermanded, considerably modified, and readers left in purposeful doubt; but on Thursday, the day of the poll, this newspaper executed a *volte face* in regard to all its previous electoral advice and plumped belatedly but wholeheartedly for Mr. Baldwin. A dilemma, indeed, for readers if they were to take any notice of these gyrations. But, of course, nobody does.

ANOTHER KIND OF COALITION

The amusing thing is that these short-sighted pro-coalitionists do not seem to have foreseen another possibility, very much less to their liking, as a result of their juggling with issues. The transfer of votes from Conservatism to Liberalism which they advocated might have resulted in so strengthening the Liberal Party that it would have been in a position to form a Government in coalition with Labour. Then what a clucking and to-do in the Carmelite farmyard! Had this happened, our apprehension for the country's welfare might in some measure have been softened by the cheerful spectacle of dismay among the geese that had tried to hatch the golden eggs and found them added.

MAJORITY AND MANDATE

During the last few days many good but timorous Conservatives have been much exercised by the question

how large a majority a leader like Mr. Baldwin should have in order to feel morally justified in going forward with fiscal change. We would answer bluntly that any majority, however small, suffices morally, though it may not prove adequate for the practical work of legislation. Any statesman raised to power is bound to apply the remedies he deems best to national ills unless an alternative Government is clearly possible. To draw back on the off-chance of some log-rolling Coalition being negotiated into existence would not only be Party suicide; it would very probably be national betrayal. Votes are given not only for a certain policy, but against its opposites. Every Conservative vote is a vote against Liberalism and still more against Socialism, and even the barest majority is a mandate to withstand those forces, not to make way for them. But they cannot be withstood by taking office to do nothing in particular. They can be withstood only by the resolute use of opportunities for all they are worth.

THE NEW ROWDYISM

Turbulence at elections is nothing novel, and while we are all for peace and decorum we would not be much perturbed by a revival of genuinely British brawling. But at several widely separated points, at Glasgow, at Leicester, and in London, there have been outbreaks of a kind altogether alien to the true character of the people. Assaulting a woman candidate is not British; organized expectation is not a British method of showing disapproval. In borrowing the ideas of the gutter intellectuals of parts of the Continent, our Communists seem to have acquired also their manners. They err grievously if they suppose that the British working-man, who is instinctively for fairplay and keeps a rough chivalry even when guilty of violence, will applaud these disgusting performances.

THE FLIGHT OF CAPITAL

That capital may be scared out of the country by the threat of a levy is true, and we happen to know of an

instance in which an immense sum has been diverted from a northern industrial centre by a business man somewhat prematurely alarmed by Labour policy. It has, however, remained for Mr. J. M. Robertson and his Liberal friends to observe the migration of money under threat of a tariff. The destination of this money is left a secret. And no wonder. For capital may well leave a country where it is menaced by a levy to take refuge in a country where it runs no danger, but where are the Free Trade countries to which capital can hasten to escape the largely unspecified and almost wholly imaginary dangers to which Mr. Baldwin here exposes it? Flight from a small and merely tepid frying-pan to a roaring fire is on the face of things rather improbable.

A MENDACIOUS ARGUMENT

Every General Election produces some malicious falsehoods, but we cannot call to mind anything quite so disgraceful as the allegation by a Liberal politician and a Liberal paper that war and other pensions are endangered by Mr. Baldwin's policy. It must have been perfectly well known to the author of this outrageous slander that there exists a Royal Warrant providing for the relation of war pensions to a rising cost of living, and that even in the absence of such a safeguard no Conservative statesman would dream for a moment of inflicting avoidable hardship on the victims of the war or any other class of poor pensioners. The sole excuse for an assertion so impudent is the belief that Mr. Baldwin's policy might in some unexplained way raise the cost of living and so lessen the purchasing power of pensions as of all other incomes. That belief is erroneous, and as regards food, we might quote against it the opinion of the directors of the Aerated Bread Company, but even were it better founded it could not excuse this revolting attempt to play on the fears of the poor.

THE WARNING FROM INDIA

Once more the working of democratic institutions in India disconcerts easy optimists. The more moderate Indian politicians have on the whole made a poor show in the elections. Several of their most important leaders have been defeated by quite secondary Extremists. In Bengal both Mr. S. R. Das and the veteran Surendranath Bannerjee have been discomfited by opponents of little personal repute, and if the Moderates have done fairly well in some other Provinces, it is plain that in the Imperial Assembly, as well as in some of the Provincial legislatures, the Extremists have quite as many seats as they need for their obstructive purposes. Unless all Indian precedents are worthless, this partial but sufficient success of the Extremists will bring a good many Moderates over to their side, and legislation will frequently have to be carried through by use of the Executive's special powers, thus creating new grievances and pretexts for further obstruction.

A MORE HOPEFUL POSITION

We hope that Lord Derby was right in stating, as he did in a speech on Tuesday last, that the Reparations Commission would soon have the documentary evidence of the actual condition of Germany which would enable it to come to a real settlement. He was alluding to the inquiry by two proposed expert committees into (1) the financial situation in Germany, and (2) the amount of German capital that had been exported into foreign countries. For complete success the participation of the United States in this inquiry is essential, and though, as we write, the action of the American Government is still in doubt, the fact that the inquiry is not hampered by restrictions leads us to think it will be favourable. At all events, the general position is more hopeful now than for some time past,

as is also shown by the conciliatory attitude M. Poincaré is evidently disposed to take with respect to the Ruhr, where work is being resumed on a considerable scale. There remains, however, the difficult question of the precise allocation of the profits from the occupied territory.

THE MARX CABINET

After some half a dozen failures President Ebert has succeeded in finding a new Chancellor in Dr. Wilhelm Marx, who two years ago became the leader of the Centre or Catholic Party. In the Marx Cabinet Dr. Stresemann is Foreign Minister, and it is safe to say that he is its most important member. In the Reichstag Dr. Marx will have the support of about 170 votes out of a total of about 460 votes, and unless he gains the assistance or at least the neutrality of the Nationalists his Government will have an extremely precarious existence and must be short lived. What is chiefly noticeable about Germany at present is the marked tendency for merely political questions to take a quite subsidiary place in presence of the national economic catastrophe from which she is suffering so terribly—and it is just this that may cause the Nationalists and men of the more moderate parties to rally to Dr. Marx.

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

On the occasion of the centenary of the promulgation of the Monroe doctrine Mr. Hughes, the American Secretary of State, delivered at the close of last week an important speech, in which he first reviewed the foreign policy of the United States regarding the Far East and Europe. Of these he had nothing fresh to say, but we note that he emphasized the view that the solution of the Franco-German controversy should be sought in the fair and comprehensive inquiry which our Government had advocated. Then he outlined the attitude of the United States to Latin America, and it might be thought from what he said that their relations were of the most amicable kind, but the truth is that most of the countries of Latin America regard the United States with suspicion and aversion. It was this, it may be recalled, that caused the failure some months ago of the Pan-American Congress on the disarmament issue.

RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA

Undoubtedly one of the most striking and significant things this week in foreign affairs is Signor Mussolini's statement that, as part of his general policy of obtaining markets wherever possible, he intends to recognize the Soviet Government. Whether he will find any great openings at present in Russia is a question, for, though Russia is again exporting grain—a cargo is expected shortly at Hull—it is the case that a large part of her enormous area is on the brink of famine, and there is no genuine surplus. The truth of course is that the Soviet Government needs cash, and is getting it by selling corn that should go to its own people. But Signor Mussolini is right in not neglecting any opportunity of advancing Italian business interests in Russia, which cannot be held back indefinitely as regards trade. Probably his real anxiety is that Italy shall not be forestalled, and so he makes a friend of the Soviet while he may. This new move of his must have its due effect on the other Great Powers.

OUR WORK IN PALESTINE

That the Government is determined to administer Palestine effectively is shown by the publication in Jerusalem last Saturday of a proclamation by the High Commissioner announcing the formation of a new Advisory Council, consisting entirely of the chiefs of the local Government. This course has inevitably had

to be taken in consequence of the refusal of the Arabs and some of the other inhabitants of the country to accept the generous offer that was given to them of a very considerable share in its administration. The conception that informs British policy concerning the Holy Land is the building up of one Palestinian nation and people, and, however regrettable the intransigence of the Arabs may be, it is possible enough that firm and just British rule will before very long lead to the attainment of the desired end.

A PERSIAN DIFFICULTY

In these Notes we have more than once commented on the disquieting position of affairs as between Iraq, or Mesopotamia, and Persia, which has resulted from the expulsion from Iraq of the leaders of the Shias, who form the large majority of the Iraqis. It will be recalled that the Shia leaders were deported because of their opposition to King Feisal, who is a Sunni Moslem, and to the plans of his Government for bringing about a forced election in its favour. The Shia leaders took refuge in Persia, the one great Shia land and naturally in sympathy with them. The effect has been to make the Persians increasingly hostile to England, and has greatly aided Soviet propaganda throughout Persia and the Middle East generally. Not only this. The vernacular Press of Baghdad is now waging a bitter campaign against Persia, and is trying hard to stir up strife between England and Persia over the Sheikh of Mohammerah, a Persian subject, through whose territory run the pipe lines of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, and who has long been friendly to us. The Baghdadi papers assert that the Sheikh is an Arab, not a Persian, and therefore "belongs" to Iraq! Hence arises a situation that will require to be carefully watched.

THAT OTHER ELECTION

It is not only the fate of Great Britain that has been in the balance these last few days. Simultaneously with the mere political election there has been at Oxford a momentous casting of votes for the rival candidates for the Professorship of Poetry—an office so serious that the climax of its electioneering literature has been a set of verses in *Punch* highly encouraging to Mr. John Bailey, but infuriating to the supporters of Mr. Garrod. Invective has not been lacking. The Garrodians have been particularly incensed by allusions to Mr. Garrod's exceptional knowledge of Greek prosody. This particular kind of insult has been rather out of fashion since Robert Buchanan associated classical scholarship with effeminacy and elicited Swinburne's reply that if ignorance of the classics connoted virility, one would not be a maid in Mr. Buchanan's way "for more than blushing came to." The revival of this old weapon is curious; the struggle is a useful reminder that chairs are as worthy of contest as seats; and our only regret is that both Mr. Bailey and Mr. Garrod cannot be elected.

CHRISTMAS FARE

Dinner on Christmas Day ought to present no difficulties, yet each year in innumerable households it causes anxiety. The hostess has but to remember that everything must lead up to the two distinctive dishes—the turkey and the plum-pudding—and to act on that principle. Thus the soup must be such as goes with English food, such, for example, as ox-tail soup, and not either too rich or too fanciful. The fish also should be more or less simple, such as sole poached in one of the plainer styles or turbot. If any meat precedes the turkey, it should be the merest morsel. The turkey itself may be done in the traditional way or more elaborately, as with chestnuts and chipolata sausages, and in either case will gain by having served with it a boat of cranberry sauce. The plum-pudding should have with it only brandy butter. And the conclusion of the whole matter should be old Cognac, and a prayer to whatever gods avert indigestion.

BREAKERS AHEAD

AS we write polling is still in progress, but whatever the decision, there are certain manifest perils in store. These are due to the triangular situation. In the past three-cornered constituencies were rare in England and only counted in Ireland. The Labour Party have immersed England in the old Irish bog.

Let us assume that by the time these words are read Mr. Baldwin has secured a working majority in every sense of the participle, that the Liberals become the opposition, and that the Labour party, without shame, takes the lower seat. Conservatism would then be faced by two factions that might unnaturally combine their forces against it. True, the Labour Party hates the Liberals even more than the Conservatives because both of them are rival conjurers of chimeras. But adversity makes strange bedfellows. The Capital Levy, however, would hardly prove the basis of this concubinage of convenience, though there is no saying what Mr. Lloyd George might not dare. The ground chosen would probably be some apparent abstraction like Proportional Representation—a theme dear to the Socialistic heart and not repugnant to the pliancies of the modern Liberal. On this or some kindred issue the Conservatives might be defeated by sophistries wholly remote from the condition-of-England problem. Again, suppose that against expectation, and abetted by ignorance and violence, the Labour Party should take the stage with a sufficient background of gaudy canvas; sheer interest would instantly unite the Liberals and the Conservatives against it. But, unless we mistake, there would be a price for the union, and the price would be the old one of Coalition under a common danger—a Coalition in which the Conservatives would serve and the Liberals control. The half-hearted lukewarmness that shirks facts and lulls enthusiasm would reassume its lethargic sway. But suppose, on the other hand, that the Liberals came in, the plight of the Conservatives and, we feel, of the country, would be even more disastrous. Under no circumstances and on no topic could the Labour Party be approached by the Conservatives, while, once more, it might be more than probable that Liberalism would court Labour in order to prolong an indefinite reign. "Waiting and seeing" in a seething Europe, friction and intermeddling through leagues, conferences and committees, would be repeated. Bureaucracy would be re-multiplied. Alternate kicks and cajoleries would follow, until some stroke of destiny startled the country from an unprepared torpor into a disarmed panic.

And outside such sequels and combinations there are some hard facts that, in any case, must be confronted. How is the annual burden of repayment to America going eventually to be met? Those four hundred millions cannot deadweight us for ever. Will it be lightened by the "consolidation" of the National Debt with a reduction of interest that the Labour and Liberal parties would denounce as repudiation? Or will the Government of that day take its courage in both hands and tax all handworkers earning high wages? Or will they dare to repeal the Trade Disputes Acts that empower an international minority to prevent production and yet crush the taxpayer who pays the shot? Let us, by the way, call attention to one aspect of these internationalist idealists. While they proclaim a cosmopolitan brotherhood of European Labour they demand the dumping of Continental wares that are only cheap from a self-sweated industry and the disordered exchanges that tend to their low standard of living.

Another problem that will have to be faced further is the problem of the English farmer. Mr. Baldwin must proceed to define his position. Arable cultivation, largely injured during the war, is offered a subsidy that with its condition of wage-payment would, initially at any rate, spell a loss. And how about the taxation of the foreign offals imported to feed our cattle? If these products become sensibly dearer, the price of meat must rise. Should Mr. Baldwin justly be returned

to power, we feel sure that these points will be developed to suit the benefit of the whole community. The community is one thing, the Communist who cares nothing about it is quite another; while the present Liberal is a Gallio except for catch-vote catchwords and illiberal schoolmastering both at home and abroad.

We wish, and expect, for Mr. Baldwin a triumph because we know that his will is pure and his mind bent on the salvation of England. The real fight, whatever the party labels, is between the Nationalist and the Internationalist. The Socialists are international revolutionaries, the Liberals international indifferentists. The time has come for a sane, steadfast, sincere and statesmanlike Nationalist. Character, not crackers, light, not rockets, are indispensable.

CHRISTMAS IN LITERATURE

CHRISTMAS books, properly so-called, are rather out of fashion nowadays. There are plenty of books published about this time that are intended for Christmas presents—and, indeed, no better present could usually be found than a judicious selection from this year's crop would afford—but most of them would be equally seasonable at Michaelmas or Easter. The past century, it has been said, covers both the rise and fall of the essentially Christmas book in the annals of our publishers. It is just over a hundred years since Washington Irving published his 'Sketch-Book' on this side of the Atlantic, through Sir Walter Scott's good offices with John Murray. A critic has observed, with some truth, that it was the chapters in this entertaining work about the observance of Christmas at Bracebridge Hall which pointed the way to that literary treatment of the Christmas festival which reached its culmination in the writings of Charles Dickens. In previous centuries there had, of course, been plenty of pamphlets and chap-books written about Christmas and its festivities, but they seldom, if ever, rose into the dignity of literature. Washington Irving, indeed, asserted his own belief that it was inspiring to read "even the dry details which some antiquaries have given of the quaint humours, the burlesque pageants, the complete abandonment to mirth and good-fellowship with which this festival was celebrated."

Perhaps to an American reader, in the days when America was several weeks' voyage away from England, there may have been more interest in these details than we can find. To the modern reader the passages about the Yule Log and the Lord of Misrule, the bringing in of the boar's head and the kissing under the mistletoe, which are to be found in the pages of Brand or Hone, Chambers's 'Book of Days,' or the collection from the *Gentleman's Magazine*, are as dull as warmed-over cabbage. Even duller, perhaps, are the highly illustrated Christmas annuals, the 'Keepsakes' and 'Garlands,' and the like, which are perhaps best remembered by the fact that Scott refused to edit one of them, and that Lydgate in 'Middlemarch' could not decide whether the engravings or the writings in them would "turn out to be the silliest." This literary form has long descended to the nursery and the school-room, where the Christmas annual, full of rattling stories and spirited pictures, still makes its appeal in many and diverse shapes. By an agreeable dichotomy, the annuals have also given us the Christmas numbers of the magazines and the weekly papers, which still preserve in their covers and illustrations—if not always in their letterpress—the flavour of the "festive season" at which they flood railway bookstalls and club tables. Perhaps there are not quite so many "wassail-bowls, robin-redbreasts, waits, snow landscapes, bursts of Christmas song" as Thackeray counted in the fifties. As supply and demand always equate themselves over a term of years, it may be assumed that these Christmas numbers continue to "meet a widely-felt want." But we no longer meet with Christmas books of the kind which Dickens and Thackeray made so popular in the middle of the nineteenth century that hosts of smaller writers went on sowing what they fondly hoped

would turn out to be the same seed for at least a full generation thereafter. It is not customary nowadays—as *The Times* said so pleasantly in 1851—"for the purveyors of amusing literature—the popular authors of the day—to put forth certain opuscles, denominated 'Christmas books,' with the ostensible intention of swelling the tide of exhilaration, or other expansive emotions, incident upon the exodus of the old and the inauguration of the new year." Nor, fortunately, is it any longer customary for *The Times* to write in that turgid strain.

Perhaps the best kind of "Christmas Book" for many people would be that defined in Nares's 'Glossary' as a manuscript volume "in which people were accustomed to keep an account of the Christmas presents they received." In these hard times a very thin duodecimo would serve the purpose for most of us. A pleasant kind of Christmas book—no doubt it has been done, though we do not remember it—would be an anthology of references to Christmas in the earlier writers. There is plenty of out-of-the-way material for such a volume. We should like to see at least the stage-directions from Ben Jonson's Christmas masque, with the loving particularity shown in the description of old Captain Christmas and his children—Misrule, "in a velvet cap, with a sprig, a short cloak, great yellow ruff, like a reveller, his torch-bearer bearing a rope, a cheese and a basket"; mince-pie, "like a fine cook's wife, drest neat"; and Wassel, "like a neat sempster and songster; her page bearing a brown bowl, drest with ribands, and rosemary before her." Swift's letters to Stella and Mrs. Dingley, in the little language which he was almost alone amongst middle-aged lovers in not being ashamed of writing, would afford some pleasing extracts—"All melly Titmasses—melly Titmasses—I said it first—I wish it a souzand times zoth with halt (heart) and soul." For sheer inappropriateness we should even prize the remarkable sentence with which Johnson begins one of his Christmas Day articles:—"Among questions which have been discussed, without any approach to decision, may be numbered the precedence or superior excellence of one virtue to another, which has long furnished a subject of dispute to men whose leisure sent them out into the intellectual world in search of employment, and who have, perhaps, been sometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty, by zeal for its advancement and diligence in its celebration."

Only fancy beginning the Christmas festivities with a sentence like that—one almost envies the *durabilia* of the eighteenth century. Curiosity leads us to inquire how an earlier great journalist, Addison, dealt with his readers on Christmas morning, but the only *Spectator* which was published on that day is even more disappointing, since it merely continues an essay on the pursuit of fame which had been begun the day before, but proved to be too long for a single paper. "This being Christmas Day," says a painful commentator, "Addison has continued to it a religious strain of thought." By way of relief we may turn to the ever-delightful Pepys—the new India-paper edition of the immortal diary, by the way, would make a Christmas present "than which, perhaps," as the Prophet Nicholas used to say. Pepys managed to make the best of both worlds on every Christmas Day. Once, for instance, he began with a pleasant walk on "a most brave cold and dry frosty morning," then heard a sermon against gaming by the worthy Bishop of Winchester in the royal chapel, "upon which it was worth observing how far they are come from taking the reprehensions of a bishopp seriously, that they all laugh in the chappell when he reflected on their ill actions and courses," and then home to dine "with great content, having a mess of brave plum-porridge and a roasted pullet." Another Christmas this innocent cynic had the luck to see a wedding in the church, "and the young people so mery one with another, and strange to see what delight we married people have to see these poor fools decoyed into our condition, every man and woman gazing and smiling at them." One other Pepys-

ian Christmas must content us:—"To dinner alone with my wife, who, poor wretch! sat undressed all day, till ten at night, altering and lacing of a noble petticoat; while I by her, making the boy read to me the Life of Julius Cæsar and Des Cartes' book of Musick—the latter of which I understand not." What a domestic scene, and what amiable candour!

A Pilgrim's Progress

London, December 6

I DISLIKE secret societies nearly as much as I love Westminster Abbey, which is one of the most public things in England. Like other people, therefore, I rubbed my eyes when I read the other morning the account of a great ceremonial service held in the Abbey by an organization called the Order of Crusaders. It is very difficult to find out anything about the Order of Crusaders except that it is secret and professes, as one of its objects, the discouragement of "class distinctions," and as another the helping of good causes and the removal of evil ones. For the furtherance of these ends extremely costly and elaborate costumes have been devised, ritual invented, and all the mumbo-jumbo with which children of all ages like to invest their secret games organized on a very elaborate and showy scale. So secret is this Order that nothing less than Westminster Abbey must serve to advertise its existence, and so modest is it in its pretensions that it has adopted the Unknown Warrior as its first Knight and supreme head.

* * *

I have every reason to believe that Bishop Ryle, the admirable Dean of Westminster and trustee for the nation of one of our most precious institutions, made full inquiries as to the aims and objects of this Order before he permitted the service to take place, and that he received satisfactory answers. Whether his inquiries went far enough is another matter. The one thing about which I am sure he would be as concerned as any one of us is that the Abbey should be kept quite free from all suspicion of being used by political bodies or factions of any colour to further their ends or advertise themselves. The Abbey is a national shrine, and should only be used for the consecration of causes or of things which are national in character. Now I am entirely unable to believe that the Order of Crusaders can make good any such claim. It has protested, indeed, very loudly—almost too loudly—that it has nothing to do with the Fascist movement; but, in fact, it bears a very strong resemblance to all movements, whether they call themselves Fascist or Ku-Klux-Klan, which have for their object the taking of the law into their own hands and bringing uncomfortable, secret and indirect pressures to bear on people with whose opinions they do not find themselves in agreement. For a few days after the holding of this solemn service I read in my newspaper that the Order of Crusaders were about to endeavour "by secret methods" to break up all the gambling dens of the country. I have never seen a gambling den, and have no idea to what extent they are a threat to the moral life of England; but I should think that they do not greatly flourish, that what the police do not know about them is hardly worth knowing, and is not likely to be known to the Crusaders. It is not their business, nor yours, nor mine, to break up gambling dens; it is our business to see that the organizations which exist for that purpose, and for the maintenance of which we pay, do their work properly.

* * *

General Sir Edward Bethune, K.C.B., who is a prominent official of the Crusaders, is reported to have said in an interview with the *Daily News*: "Our methods may be sometimes a little outside the law; personally, I do not care a jot if they are." I think that Bishop Ryle is on very dangerous ground if he

lends Westminster Abbey to the glorification of bodies of men who declare their methods to be "outside the law." He seems to have been influenced in favour of the Crusaders' request for the Abbey by an assurance that the movement was moral and social, and was expressed by the motto "Service," that it had no connection with the so-called Fascist movement, that it was strongly supported by the Home Secretary, and that the Duke of York wished to be present. But even Home Secretaries sometimes have friends who are able to enlist their sympathies on behalf of an alleged good cause; and the Duke of York, like other persons in his position, is dependent for his knowledge of institutions like this largely on what he is told by others. But it does not seem to me that the attendance either of the Home Secretary, or the Duke of York, or both, could make suitable to Westminster Abbey an occasion which otherwise would not have been suitable to it; and the mere fact that a society is secret should debar it, not necessarily from the private, but certainly from the public blessing of the Church and the use of public monuments.

* * *

Secret societies are generally in fact a nuisance. When there is a real need for them there is no need for secrecy, and the fact that their methods are dependent on secrecy means as a rule that their methods are utterly un-English and unsuited to our national life and institutions. When, moreover, they declare themselves through their own officials to be ready to employ methods which are outside the law—in other words, to supersede the constituted authority provided for keeping order—they ally themselves at once with the spirit of anarchy, Bolshevism, and other baleful movements which, however worthy may be their professed objects, come in the long run to the furtherance of them by some form of violence. There have been, and are, secret societies that have done good and benevolent work. The essence of them, however, is that you do not hear of them. They are, in other words, really secret, and do not take Westminster Abbey to advertise their existence and secure recruits.

FILSON YOUNG

AT DORCHESTER

By IVOR BROWN

The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall. By Thomas Hardy.

O Jan! O Jan! O Jan! A Recension of a Wessex Folk-Piece by Thomas Hardy.

The Play of St. George. As Aforetime acted by Dorset Mummers.

Given at the Corn Exchange, Dorchester, on November 28, 29, and 30.

THE journey through an England bound in frost and fog had its reward. After a thousand and one first nights in Shaftesbury Avenue (same plays, same audiences, same mechanical applause), here was another facet of the English drama. Every winter the amateur actors of Casterbridge pay tribute to the borough's greatest citizen; usually they dramatize a Wessex novel, and act their version in a simple, forthright way. This year Mr. Hardy had returned the compliment by writing direct for the actors. Indeed, if one excepts 'The Dynasts' as being mainly study-drama, he had given them his first stage-play. It was an occasion for Dorchester, but Dorchester is not a town to be flurried. It took its invasion of writers and photographers and Hardy collectors with a calm fully worthy of a city whose roots go as deeply into English history as any proud borough can desire.

The town is not a show place. The garish multiple-store has got a firm grip of its high-street; it exports agricultural machinery and steam-rollers as well as Wessex novels, and a casual glance would suggest that a steam-roller has passed over its romance and its antiquities. But the place is more than a home of

manuscripts; it is a manuscript itself, a palimpsest of English history, where careless generations have written their own testimony on top of their fore-runner's depositions. It is a town where a gardener re-laying his lawn may light on a statue of Jupiter, and where the relics of an historic eighteenth-century theatre may be stumbled across behind a pottery shop. The "bill" which the Hardy players presented was all of the past Wessex; they looked backwards to Tristan, to Merrie England, to the eighteen-forties. Living in Dorchester a man may well be pardoned the luxury of looking backward, and that with energy; for the gifts of the present are far from lovely. So, too, the gifts of the immediate past, as one reflects on entering the modern Corn Exchange, which is now the home of the drama in a town that has had many a theatre beginning with that prehistoric earth-work, made amphitheatre by the Romans, which stands hard up against the railway.

'The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall' was begun by Mr. Hardy in 1916, laid aside, and finished this year. It is close-packed in thought and action, and the clash of Mark, Tristan, and the two Iseults at Tintagel comes with brief violence, and, of course, is shot through with the author's vehement compassion. The chorus, men and women with antiphonal chants, ask—

Why did Heaven warrant, in its whim,
A twain mismated should bedim
The courts of this encompassment
With bleeding loves and discontent?

"In its whim." We are back with that hard President of the Immortals who had his "sport" with Tess. "As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods." There is no softening of Mr. Hardy's scrutiny of the scheme of things, and there is all the old pity for the humans enmeshed in it. Also there are two lyrics of rare beauty. The weakness of the piece lies not in its dramatic values or its philosophy, but in occasional harsh antithesis of rare and strained words ("racked was the Queen with qualm and cark") with a prosaic diction that declines towards bathos. The challenge to the actors is severe.

"When the play is in verse or in rhythmical prose," wrote Mr. W. B. Yeats, "a company of amateurs, if they love literature, and are not self-conscious and really desire to do well, can often make a better hand of it than the ordinary professional company." Often, perhaps; certainly not always. High tragedy demands some technical apparatus in the actor; sincerity is not enough. But sincerity does at least guarantee freedom from the flourish, from the glibly vulgar, from the out-Heroding of Herod which professional self-confidence may bring. The Hardy Players, with the exception of Dr. E. W. Smerdon, whose Tristan was exquisite, cannot fairly be judged by the standards one would apply, for instance, to Miss Thorndike. They are doing a different thing. They are far closer to simple recitation, leaving the expression of emotion to the author instead of forcing it by their own gesture. They act with their voices, not with their bodies. Apart from the chanters, for whose monotone I did not care, they gave the written word its due of clarity and emphasis. It was a work of piety and quality.

Mr. Hardy has specifically called his tragedy "a play for mummers"; that specification would apply far better to his second piece, which is based on childhood's memories of play-acting in his father's house (date about 1844), and is a Wessex recension of the ditty about the Keys of Heaven. The fashionable gentleman with cane and beaver hat offers to the fashionable lady, a flouncing beauty in a pannier skirt, all the world's wealth for her love, applying, as each offer fails, to Jan, the Wessex farmer, for further steps in the courtier's progress. Madam will not walk or talk until he offers the keys of his heart, Jan's last advice. It was all mimed to music, with jolly ambling dances and a great roll of broad Wessex vowels from the lips of Jan (Mr. W. R. Bawler), whose humour was as admirable as his velveteens.

Mr. Yeats's high opinion of amateur acting was certainly justified by the success of the romping piece of fireside fun, 'The Play of St. George.' The play fits in with a "Hardy programme," because in 'The Return of the Native' he has laid down exactly how it should be done. The players were faithful to the instruction; the warriors were in white, slashed with bright bows and rosettes, and had visors of ribbon dangling over their faces. They slew and were slain, and were finally revived by the highly commercial doctor, whose conduct suggests that the Shavian view of medicine was current at the time of the Crusades. This jovial relic of Christmas mummery might easily be spoiled by the professional or the self-consciously artistic touch. Sophistication would slay it as surely as St. George slew his bottle-green dragon with sword of lath, and as surely as Slasher, the Valiant Soldier, did his desperate fighting for the right against all Saracens, Turks, and Infidels. It is dreadful to think what might happen to such a play when lost, stolen, or strayed in Hampstead. Shades of the studio begin to close . . . Artlessly, exuberantly mimed upon the Dorchester stage, it was so gay and withal so beautiful that instinctively one asked, "Whaur's your Lovat Fraser noo?" That is the best of Dorchester. You escape from Shaftesbury Avenue without running into Hampstead or Hammersmith. Here, in devious, history-haunted lanes, you breathe a new play-house air that sweetly recommends itself, so fresh it is and eager.

EDITH THOMPSON—AND ANOTHER

BY MAX PEMBERTON

CRIME has done much for great literature—and it has done not a little, again, in this remarkable book* which Mr. Filson Young has given us. Why "bloody murder" seems to produce stylists—or to attract them—it is difficult to say, but assuredly it does; and from the days of Greek bias towards incest-slaughter to an age which has witnessed the hanging of an emotional woman at the bidding of an outraged Suburbia, the story is the same. Stevenson was, perhaps, at his best in his exploitation of the Appin murder, and Thomas Hardy assuredly did not surpass 'Tess.' We had half the stylists in the country busy when Carlisle gave us "gigmanity"—and it seems but yesterday that Henry Irving was here writing of crime with great dignity of words, and betraying in every phrase the influence of the fettered phantoms which haunted him. Now comes Mr. Filson Young with so finely written an introduction to this record of the suburb and the scaffold that I know nothing in all the literature of crime to better it. Assuredly a most satisfying piece of work, and to those who still believe in the art of words, a sheer delight.

But it is far more than the art of words. It is a shrewd and masterly analysis of an emotional woman, whom Bayswater hanged because of the continuing importance of Mount Sinai. To-day, tutored opinion does not believe that Edith Thompson should have gone to the scaffold; it certainly does not believe that the case was merely one of sordid adultery, as the learned judge described it. Nor does it accept the theory that the woman was just one of those hysterical products of the age with no soul above murder and no goal above desire. Far from it. It discovers in her, as Mr. Filson Young has said, "the presence of that something which lifts a woman out of whatever class she may naturally belong to and sets her in a class apart—the class of influencing, compelling, driving, beckoning women who have power over men, and through them over the world."

Such is the woman who, immured in the fastnesses of Ilford, dreamed her dreams of another world, and peopled it with one man, her lover, Frederick Bywaters.

* 'Trial of Frederick Bywaters and Edith Thompson.' Edited by Filson Young. Hodge. 10s. 6d. net.

They were vague dreams—the dreams of one who sought happiness vaguely, not by the road of motor-cars and chinchilla coats, but by the path which should lead to freedom. The wonderful letters are the expression less of passion than of love, and all the toying with the possible death of "the obstacle" might well amount to no more than the heroism of the ruffian at the public-house door, who tells his wife that he will swing for her. What she needed was freedom, the wings of the bird to carry her forth from the cage into which destiny had thrust her maliciously. Beyond the bars she perceived the clear blue sky—she knew not in what heaven. And over her sordid life, her daily drudgery, and her nightly quarrels with her husband loomed Mount Sinai—a fantastic face, glowering over the shoulder as the vision of the anabaptist.

Her letters hanged her—and yet, when questioned, she retorted fairly, "Yes, but you don't know the letters he wrote me!" We do not know them. Bywaters remains a somewhat brutal young man, in whose eyes, possibly, the whole thing was merely an amorous adventure the more. It is said that he got drunk both before and after visiting the Graydons that night, and was "blind" when he killed Thompson. The woman, he declared, did not know that he would be at the station, and he was mad because she had refused to go out with him and deliberately had preferred to accompany Percy Thompson to the theatre. Following the pair, Bywaters averred that he saw the husband put his arm suddenly round his wife's waist, and observed that she made no effort to resist him. That decided it. He rushed upon his victim and stabbed him to death with terrible ferocity. An *ex parte* statement, of course, and one, it may be, that will not hold water. But it is in every way as credible as the assumption that the woman knew he was there, and that she deliberately held her husband in talk that Bywaters might stab him.

But of all that has been written, and all that has been said about this remarkable case, I prefer the masterly analysis and shrewd judgment which Mr. Filson Young reveals in this engrossing volume. One thing is certain—there will be no need for any other account of a crime which must become historic. Here is the story, the whole story, and nothing but the story—save that measured judgment and close reasoning of which the author is the acknowledged master. And, I repeat, in the estimate of real literature to which crime has given birth, this work assuredly must figure with distinction.

PIANISTS—A PUGILIST AND A POET

By DYNELEY HUSSEY

IN the days of old there were giants upon the earth. And in the days of old pianoforte playing was in the nature of a boxing match between performer and pianoforte, a contest in which the strings often got the worst of it and the music was usually counted out in the first round. Our modern players—the real "moderns" like Mr. Wiener and Mr. Pol-Morin—are lily-fingered fellows; and those, who still have in them the old fighting spirit, observe the Queensberry rules and wear the gloves. Mr. Eugen D'Albert is a survivor of the old school, and fights with the naked fist. In the manner of the would-be complimentary Mayor who greeted a famous artist with "Mais, Monsieur, vous êtes le Carpentier du piano," D'Albert might be dubbed its Dempsey. He is the true heavy-weight with a left punch that will knock out anyone, except Beethoven, in ten seconds.

It was unfortunate, therefore, that for last week's combat at the Aeolian Hall Mr. D'Albert chose for his opponents such easy victims as Chopin, Schumann, Debussy, and young Brahms. The last-named was represented by the F Minor Sonata, a nice romantic young gent of the eighteen-forties with a stock and beaver hat and check pantaloons, but with no lack of

what, since I am adopting the sporting tone, I may be permitted to call "guts." But, withal, a dreamy sort of fellow, given to a pretty contemplation of the moon, and apt, therefore, to take his eye off his opponent. One wanted to throw in the towel during the first movement; the *Scherzo* was battered to pieces by an unending rain of blows; and the *Finale* was knocked out in fifteen bars, so that the rest was just galumphing by the victor, with the Three-blind-mice Chorale as a hymn of triumph. The slow movements were handled a little more gently. But even there the bass growled and frowned in petulant anger; there were clouds upon the face of the moon, and the Retrospect was full of unhappy memories. No, the methods that suit late Beethoven won't do for early Brahms.

There were moments, none the less, that made up for all this, the guitars in 'Soirée dans Grenade,' some quiet passages in 'Carnaval,' and the 'Berceuse' of Chopin, which was carried through in one straight line from beginning to end with none of the usual maundering prettiness. It is D'Albert's characteristic method, this carrying through of the music without a break; something may be lost in the details, but, where there are big bones beneath, his long steady line limns them worthily. In the Ballade, too, he obtained a startling effect by lulling us to security and then coming down with all his force suddenly upon the *fortissimo* chord, so that we jumped in our seats. It was a little reminiscent, perhaps, of the sensational crash in the first movement of the Pathetic Symphony, for which I always wait in naughty expectation of seeing the old ladies taken by surprise; but it was a thrill such as we rarely get from a pianist.

Mr. Ernst von Dohnányi also played the F minor Sonata of Brahms at his concert last Saturday, and proved an ideal interpreter. He is the poet, not the pugilist, at the pianoforte, but not one of our invertebrates who, having none themselves, cannot define for us the bones of music. He has power to make the instrument render its full volume, without overstepping the bounds of noise. His tone is clear and rich, singing the melodies, and his rhythms are strong yet supple like the muscles of an athlete. The very qualities these for the F minor Sonata! He made the passion genuine and his sense of beauty enabled him to present the poetry of the second movement without mawkishness, to realise for us the lines written at its head:—

Der Abend dimmert, der Mondlicht scheint
Da sind zwei Herzen in Liebe vereint
Um halten sich selig umfangen.

During the *Scherzo* he sat smiling to himself, seeming to say "What fun this all is!" He enjoys playing, and communicates his enjoyment, which is perhaps the supreme quality of the artist—and, one may add, the best aim for a critic.

Dohnányi is, moreover, a composer of exceptional interest, the latest master in that very Romantic School which all the forced laughter of the Schönbergians cannot kill. Like Brahms, he leans on the past, because he finds the medium of the classics adequate for his self-expression. But he is no academic musician, turning out sonatas and symphonies made according to recipe and shaped in worn-out moulds. He is a very live, creative artist working in the great tradition of German music, but impressing upon the old forms the mark of his individuality. On first hearing his music one may say "Ah! that's from Liszt; that big tune might be Strauss's; those cross-rhythms were invented by Brahms." But these casual likenesses, as of individual features in the face of a child whose parents one has known, disappear on intimacy and in their place one recognizes his own personality. The chief characteristics, I should say, are a sense of humour—sometimes sharpened to a fine point of wit, but never descending to the practical joking with a touch of nastiness in it that Strauss used to affect, nor to the silly sort of clowning in which the very moderns indulge—and a fierce, almost savage, poetry which is the heritage of his Hungarian blood.

Correspondence

WHEN THE GROCER IS KING

(FROM OUR FRENCH CORRESPONDENT)

Paris, December 5

HERE is a new book by M. Robert de Jouvenel, a tiny book as usual, and, as usual, a brilliant book. Its title is 'Feu l'Etat,' and its subject is, as the title implies, the substitution of something for the entity still known as the State. Who is it that steps in the shoes, as it were, of that majestic abstraction? Trade, industrialism, finance do so; that is to say, vested interests of whatever kind and bearing, no matter what their names. On this subject Robert de Jouvenel writes a hundred and thirty pages which ought to be illuminating but are more glittering than clear, and leave one with rather a tantalized feeling that the subject is all-important, that it deserves our most concentrated attention, but that we have given it more time than we can spare considering the results secured. Robert de Jouvenel, who is full of humour, is not a humorist; but he is not a teacher, either. He never speaks to you. He gives you the impression that you are welcome to listen to his soliloquy as he picks up one newspaper after another or swiftly glances at the volumes on his shelves, but he is not talking for your or anybody else's benefit; he chooses to talk out loud just because he enjoys raising everyday journalistic words to the level of literature, and has a knack of saying apparently simple things which turn out to be profound things. Economics handled in that way become seductive, till we discover them to be as baffling as ever. Of M. de Jouvenel's sincerity there is no question. He is a radical journalist, in spite of his descent and training, and there is no doubt that he is fully conscious of the fact that a number of his remarks fall heavily on the 'Union des Intérêts Economiques,' that is to say, on the majority in the French Chamber—that is to say, ultimately, on M. Poincaré. But he is too attentive an observer ever to be a mere partisan.

The spirit of the French Revolution was Liberalism, that is, a tendency to do with as little government as possible. When the economic crises which generally attend revolutions were passed, the French became Free Traders in imitation of their English neighbours, and the slogan for a long time was, *laissez faire, laissez passer*. In time, Industrialism appeared, became conscious of itself and of its importance, and, as it happened to be another name for what used to be called the Bourgeoisie, forced its will upon bourgeois governments, and Protection succeeded Free Trade. Fluctuations followed, thanks to which competition, aided by inventiveness and financial developments, became constantly keener, much to the satisfaction of the consumer. Finally, the Great War came, and, as had been the case with every other war, it gave commerce wonderful chances. The formula this time happening to be unity in everything, unity in trade resulted in giving trading people prodigious power. Governments could not do without them, and bowed to them lower than they had ever done. When the war was over the business front remained unbroken, and France found herself in the hands of a few invincible associations which called themselves consortiums, but might just as well have called themselves trusts or cartels.

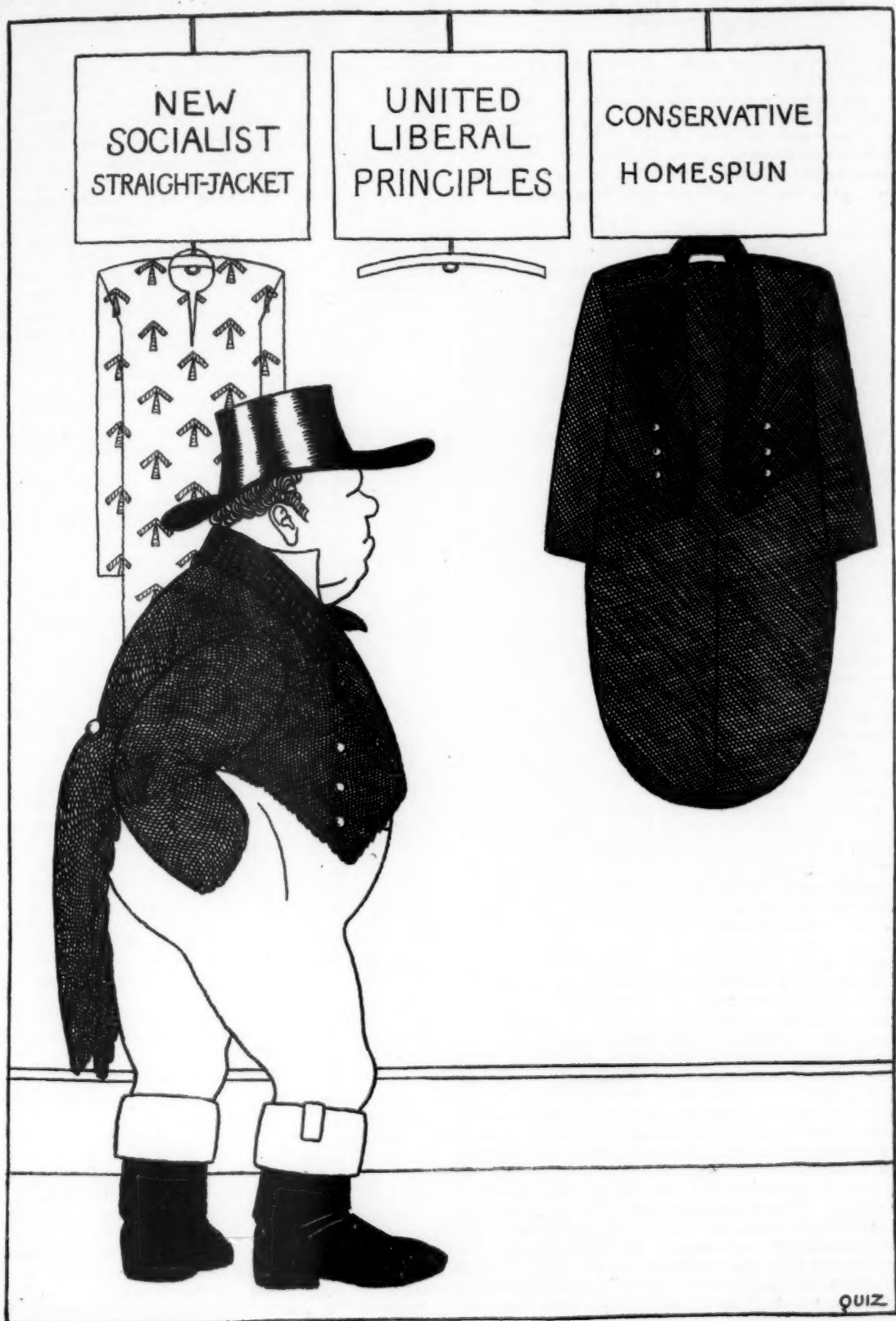
The results are visible. They can be summed up in a happy phrase (which for a while charmed the working classes, quite as open to the delight of bullying as their betters ever were): "High salaries go along with high prices," and also in a form of Protection which M. Loucheur, its inventor, called the tap theory, i.e., let as many foreign goods flow in as will not interfere with national prosperity. In other words, let nothing happen that may disturb the syndicates controlling metallurgy, the textile industry, the great railway companies, and even, recently, agriculture. From being witnesses

that everybody and everything is free, business as well as political opinions, the Governments one after the other have become very much what the Kings of France used to be in feudal days.

The Radical Press, echoed by many foreign periodicals, insists that the power of these new high and mighty extends farther than the weak imagination of the man in the street can realize. Day after day we read allusions to the influence of the 'Comité des Forges' on our Ruhr policy, and on the farce of Parliamentary debates staged in advance at the sittings of purely commercial boards. When I hear that business interfered, for mere business purposes, with the rebuilding of the North, I am shocked at first; but gradually, remembering many slight indications noticed in that part of France during the last five years, an unpleasant certitude forms itself in my soul. Besides, it is not necessary to be a native of the devastated regions to see unmistakable signs that Governments must be strongly influenced by people a great deal more in earnest than politicians. Anybody who lives—were it only for a few weeks every year—in the country must have noticed that the dismal prophecies made by economists about the long decades necessary to reconstitute the herds of France all came untrue. There is plenty of cattle, and farmers have gradually had to make up their minds to sell their beasts to the butcher for half the price they used to get, yet meat costs more than it ever did. The other day, the Paris Prefect of Police, having spoken of an investigation into this anomaly, drew on himself rather a formidable letter from a municipal councillor, who did not mince matters, and told the Prefect plainly that he knew, better than anybody else, there was collusion, built on the tap theory, between the producers and the Villette middle-men. You never see any more the wonderful words *A louer anywhere*; but you constantly read *changement de Propriétaire* over the shops of bakers and grocers. In a few cases the sudden announcement over a door familiar to one, where one expected to see the slow-going owner yawning many years more, has been staggering. Through some mysterious process those people make more money in two or three years than their neighbours can make in a lifetime. Protests in the Press and in the Chamber avail little. The Senate is at present legislating against exaggerated rents, and rouses the indignation of the Chamber by regarding as legitimate a rise of 120 per cent. But I know cases, not a few, of rents being raised 300 per cent. Interesting disclosures in the newspapers show that stationery in France is so expensive because it is entirely controlled by the Hachette Company. In every case you find that somebody controls something very much as mediæval barons used to control the roads.

Is there a remedy? M. de Jouvenel speaks of an economic Parliament alongside of the usual political affair. He founds great hopes upon this body, and I am willing to let anybody try it, although there is such a Parliament in Berlin to duplicate the Reichstag. But in spite of smiling cynics who call themselves realists, I think a crusade undertaken on the usual publicity lines would do something, if it were run by men bold enough at this time of day to recommend honesty. Bishops might do something, too, if they would remember that man also lives by bread. But, while hearing that Governments are controlled by financiers, people will go on appealing against financiers to Governments.

¶ A certain number of the original drawings by 'Quiz,' recently on exhibition at the Leicester Galleries, are still for sale, price £10 10s. each, mounted and framed. A list of the unsold drawings will be forwarded on application to the Publisher of the "SATURDAY REVIEW."



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, No. 76
JOHN BULL MAKES HIS CHOICE
By 'QUIZ'

Letters to the Editor

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters which are of reasonable brevity, and are signed with the writer's name, are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us by the first post on Wednesday.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Your correspondent Colonel Smith does not set a very good example to young officers who are, presumably, taught, as they were in my time, that, in a disputation, one should preserve one's temper and should think twice and thrice before calling a man a liar, even though one may seem to have proved that his statements are inaccurate. Only once does Colonel Smith seriously attempt to controvert my statements, and then he confuses the money owed by us to America with the cash payments which, despite Parliamentary protest, we continued to make to France long after it was apparent that she had no intention of meeting her obligations to us. (The official explanation was, so far as I remember, that these payments came under a different agreement. That they came out of the same pockets was a point too fine for the departmental mind to grasp.)

It is a relief to turn to M. d'Auvergne's letter. Here we have none of the controversial methods so dear to the followers of Mr. Lloyd George and the Coagulated Press, but a carefully reasoned exposition by one who has the courage to permit a sense of wrong to overcome a laudable pride of ancestry. In his survey of history he exposes, without mercy, the failings of the country of his origin; but even he has omitted something. In a translation of Duruy's 'Short History of France' we read:—"It was not the intention of the French to preserve these conquests; the Palatinate was again ravaged, and on this occasion (my italics) with ferocity; 100,000 persons, driven from their land by the flames, went to seek vengeance in Germany." Evidently the gentle art of devastation for devastation's sake was not a Prussian discovery. I shall, of course, be told that this is ancient history. Perhaps so. But peoples, especially peasant peoples, have long memories. The devastation of the Palatinate occurred within a year of the Battle of the Boyne, and many years after the sack of Drogheda. Will anyone who has studied recent history in Ireland suggest that those two events are forgotten? Incidentally, it is worthy of note that the French are again in the Palatinate, and bid fair vicariously to emulate their former achievements in that unhappy land.

M. d'Auvergne goes to the root of the matter when he says that "we did not dethrone Germany in order to make France king." I would go farther and say that it was never our intention that Germany should attain such a position that her dethronement would be necessary. The Englishman would, in fact, seem to be like Frankenstein, fated unwittingly to produce the instrument of his own undoing. The monster whom we overthrew in 1918 was incubated in the warmth of English smiles. To-day we have raised up another monster in his place. And, as I shall show, there are not wanting signs that the process may again be repeated.

In perpetrating this recurrent folly the Englishman is actuated by that sentiment which, at present, is the trump card of the Gallophile. I should be the last man on earth to decry sentiment. But sentiment is a plaguy thing unless it is tempered by sense. I read recently the critique of a play (or was it a novel?) in which a man saves the life of a fellow creature only to become the slave of the ingrate for whose continued existence he

was responsible. This is the position in which England finds herself to-day; and for the far-seeing there are indications that she may find herself similarly situated in years to come. There is nothing, at the moment, of greater significance to England and France than the appeal which is being made for the relief of distress in Germany. That the appeal will meet with a ready response I hope and believe. No Englishman worthy of the name can contemplate unmoved the privations which will be endured by millions of Germans during this winter. To these starving men, women, and children will be transferred the sympathy which France has abused, and in the wake of that sympathy will revive the sentiment which France has killed. That that sentiment will be to the advantage of Germany is more than probable. But God send that it may be tempered by sense, that we may be content when Germany is restored to her rightful place among the nations and that the Englishman does not once again play the thankless part of a sentimental Frankenstein.

I am, etc.,

NELSON NORTH

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Mr. d'Auvergne writes: "A too-powerful France may be as dangerous to England as a too-powerful Germany; nay, more dangerous, because nearer." There is only one answer that it is necessary to make to this, and that is—that it is simply not true. It is demonstrably not true. It is so obviously not true that even Mr. d'Auvergne and those who share his views could not help acknowledging its untruth if they only gave a moment's real thought to the matter. For the supremacy which they pronounce so "dangerous" actually exists at the present time. I suppose that, with her superiority in the air, France could lay London and most of our big cities in ruins at very short notice. Yet we do not sleep any the less soundly in our beds on that account.

Why? Because we know very well that France—I am speaking of the present-day France, not of the France of Louis XIV. or the Middle Ages—is a civilized Power. We know that she has, like ourselves, no pleasure in war (apart from self-defence), and is only too willing to submit any questions that may arise between her and another Power to the arbitrament of logic and reason. But now suppose Germany had the position of supremacy which France enjoys—how should we feel about it? There is no need to give the answer. Indeed, we should not have time to feel much about it at all—the bombs would be bursting about our ears!

Mr. d'Auvergne, in his eagerness to help forward a thoroughly bad argument, has been led—unwittingly, of course—into writing nonsense.

I am, etc.,

A. R. CRIPPS

Worthing

"LOCAL OPTION AND PROHIBITION"

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—As a woman who has lived with Prohibition in Toronto, Canada, 1916-1919, the paragraph on local option in your Notes for the Week in the issue for December 1 greatly interested me. I know from experience how Prohibition affects the middle and working-classes; the wealthy, who have the means to lay in liquor stocks, it does not touch. During the influenza epidemic in Toronto, 1917-18, I have stood in a queue for hours to get a doctor's prescription filled for a neighbour whose only chance of pulling through was a little whisky. The smuggled liquor that I could have got, illegally, with ease, would have been poison. There were drunkenness and liquor

poisoning cases in "dry" Toronto; it paid people to go 800 miles to Montreal to get supplies; fabulous prices were paid for cheap rye whisky, nearly as poisonous as prussic acid. If a veto could not succeed in such large areas as the Canadian Provinces, how would it fare in little England? If Harrow votes no-licence and Ealing no-change, we in Sudbury, between the two, are criminals in Harrow if we have a glass of beer, but law-abiding citizens in Ealing. Local option would make the law a laughing stock and a mockery.

Vegetarians hate meat, and believe meat-eating to be dangerous. With more power they might introduce a local option on the question of butchers' shops. It would be quite as reasonable as the Temperance Party's L.O. Eating meat or fruit, drinking beer or cocoa, working or playing, are all personal questions for each individual to decide for himself. How ridiculous to make political issues of them. The Temperance Party have said that local option is "the stepping stone to Prohibition"; maybe it will also prove a stumbling block to the Liberal Party in this Election.

As you say, the real road to temperance in England is through public-house reform.

I am, etc.,

(Mrs) H. W. THOMAS

"Westgate," Sudbury.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Does not the question of local option depend upon the options which it provides for the expression of the public will? I agree that if local option is understood to mean, as in Scotland, "no change," "limitation" and "no licence," it is not likely to find favour here. But if it is constructive in that it permits of experiments on the principle of the Carlisle scheme, there is much to be said for it.

At the present time Scotland is declaring its opinion by means of its local option powers, and the "no licence" party is showing very badly. Of 141 areas which have been polled to date, December 1, 127 have voted "no change"; five "limitation"; four "no licence"; while two areas have repealed "no licence" and three have repealed "limitation." There is a growing movement in Scotland which favours public-house reform on "Carlisle" lines.

I am, etc.,

FRED CARTER

The Abbey House, Westminster

CANADA AND PROTECTION

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—There was an article in your issue of November 24 headed 'Canada and Protection,' in which you state that the Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie King is "a descendant of Mr. Mackenzie, the great opponent of Sir John Macdonald." This is not so. Mr. Alexander Mackenzie, the opponent of Sir John Macdonald, to whom you allude, was a Scotsman. Mr. Mackenzie King's ancestor, William Lyon Mackenzie, was in the forefront of Canadian politics in 1837, so that his ancestors for three generations back have been Canadian.

Will you pardon me if I also express great regret that you should draw Canadian affairs into Imperial politics? I really think that it is a very grave mistake, and can result in no good to the Empire.

I am, etc.,

PETER C. LARKIN

[We are obliged to Mr. Larkin for his correction; but we do not quite see how "Canadian affairs" can be kept out of any intelligent discussion of Imperial politics.—ED. S.R.]

Reviews

THE BEGINNINGS OF BURKE

The Early Life, Correspondence and Writings of The Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke, LL.D. By the Late A. P. J. Samuels. With Supplementary Chapters by The Rt. Hon. A. W. Samuels. Cambridge University Press. 25s. net.

A PATHETIC interest attaches to this researchful record of an unfamiliar period in the life of the greatest political thinker of the later eighteenth century in England, and one of the greatest that the world has ever seen. It is written by a young man of great promise and high attainments, who, as a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, was awarded the crowning honour of being elected auditor of the College Historical Society—that direct descendant of the "Club" instituted by Burke himself. Then the war intervened. He served with distinction in the 11th Royal Irish Rifles, which formed part of the renowned 36th Ulster Division. Wounded at the opening of the Somme Battle, he fell at Messines in September, 1916, and the task of completing his notes and pursuing his investigations devolved on a father bereaved of his only son. It is fitting that a brave patriot should illustrate the early days of one who in his later years opposed the new Whigs with "that salutary prejudice called our country," and the work gains additional value from the fact that many of the documents consulted perished last year by the barbarous hands of rebel incendiaries.

It is an antiquarian's chronicle that seeks no ornamental aids, though an enthusiastic ardour sustains the style. Nor is it the least of its contributions that from the first it illustrates the bias of Burke's mind towards the "via media" in Whiggism. Vehement to violence in expression, rich in imagery, dramatic in posture as Burke proved throughout his career, he never lost the balance of thought instilled by his classical studies, and perhaps by his Quaker schoolmaster. And though such affinities go unmentioned here, it should be remembered that his train of political reflections, and often even the turn of their utterance, are, in fact, founded on that very Bolingbroke whom at the start he derided, and whom he detested to the end.

Burke was born of a Protestant father and a Catholic mother, just as he was to marry the Catholic daughter of a Presbyterian mother. The penal laws enacted for such mixed alliances long after his birth never touched him in Ireland, and in England they were powerless to do so. As a boy he was transplanted from his damp home in Dublin on Arranquay to Ballyduffrin, at the northern end of County Cork. There he frequented two schools, the one that of a cross old dame, whom he and his brothers once set out in a fit of melodramatic frenzy to exterminate, the other of an old-fashioned dominie named O'Halloran, whom Burke, already famous, greeted on a visit to Ireland in 1766, and "tipped" with five guineas. But the real dawn of his promise arose when he was sent to the Kildare school of the Yorkshire Quaker, Abraham Shackleton, purist in mind, heart, and scholarship. The boy grew to love him all the more because of qualities in several ways supplementary to his own, and he struck up a lifelong friendship (only once to be clouded) with his son Richard, whose correspondence forms such a feature of this volume. Both of them were born lovers of literature and the classics; both in loved yet inadequate homes were thrown in upon themselves, and more especially Burke, who, for all his inborn eloquence, exhibited much of that pent-up aspiration which is the birthright of genius, and has been so finely psychologized by Disraeli in his 'Contarini Fleming.' The letters of the two inseparables come to a head when

Burke went to Trinity College, Dublin, in the mid 'forties, while his friend remained with his parents. They show much thought and feeling, in trivialities rarely trivial, in big things never small, while they present that sympathetic diversity which is the bond of union. Ireland was struggling with adversity and apathy, and the part of it most familiar to the two youths wore the aspect of the 'Deserted Village' of which Goldsmith, who had just gone down from the college when Burke entered it, has painted so moving a picture. Swift, who was dying "like a poisoned rat in a hole," had ceased to stir the torpor; even the young Pretender's incursion of 1745 left Ireland cold.

The name of Swift (though unmentioned) has caused a curiosity of literature in these pages which goes unrecognized and unexplained. The two intimates were in the habit of exchanging both Latin and English verses—the latter on both sides mediocre—of which Burke was the acknowledged superior. Shackleton indited some poor stuff on 'Phaeton,' which Burke polished. And we are informed that they eventually emerged (presumably under his polishing hand) in the shape of a spirited satire, which is given in full. What was our surprise, when we read it, to find that these verses 'On the hangings in Dublin Castle' are really by Swift, being none other than those on the same tapestries which conclude with—

When to a height their fury grown,
Finding, too late, they can't retire,
He proves the real Phaeton,
And truly sets the world on fire.

Was the plagiarism a joke by Burke, or has Mr. Samuels been misled? It is impossible to believe that either Burke or Shackleton could have penned a satire so good or so instinct with Swift's originality.

Years later, and not long after Burke had married Miss Nugent, he brought his young wife, with her auburn tresses, to visit his old school. A charming picture, borrowed from 'The Leadbeater Papers,' appears in these pages. The great man was "expected with impatient wonder." The chaise stopped "at the big gate." Burke gracefully alighted with his pretty young wife, who to the wonderment of the family wore no cap or covering on her head. This was "her husband's taste" of "when unadorned adorned the most." But she yielded to the suasion of the Quaker ladies, and consented to wear "a French nightcap"—"the first that was ever seen in Ballitore." This cap incident was never forgotten, and forms the subject of a playful after-allusion.

Mr. Samuels's volume has unearthed Burke's contribution to *The Reformer*, a sort of minor *Spectator*, which the young Burke founded on quickly shifting sands. Several of these essays concern the theatre, and one of them reprobates kissing on the stage, a Quaker prejudice which the orator who threw down the dagger on the floor of the House of Commons, and hurled the Book from the Bristol hustings, must afterwards have abandoned. It also pursues the ramifications of the Club, and is concerned with the famous Kelly riots against Sheridan's father, when he was acting with Miss Bellamy. The description of this shameful incident seems inadequate as well as unjust, and it should be compared with the material given by Mr. Walter Sichel in the first volume of his 'Sheridan.' It further exhaustively examines Burke's attitude towards that "honest" Charles Lucas who was the Wilkes of Ireland. But it does not mention that on that very night when Thomas Sheridan was assailed Lucas accompanied Miss Chamberlaine, who from that moment fell in love with, and afterwards married, the hero of the evening. Nor does it add that the younger and immortal Sheridan wrote of Lucas that he was "a martyr to Liberty." Lucas attacked the selfishness and corruption of the Dublin Corporation. Against such abuses Burke would fight at every moment of his career from his Rockingham days to those when he denounced the French Revolution. One needed not have been a "democrat" to do that: and rightly at

this very period he scathed the selfishness of landlord-absentees.

Space forbids us to do full justice to the manifold interest of this illuminating book. Our only cavil against it is that it is more a *mémoire-à-servir* than a picture. But its materials exhale atmosphere, and enable us to understand the budding faculties of a genius who could bore the House of Commons when he lectured them with a rasping voice, enchant Westminster Hall at the Warren Hastings Trial, and lay the foundations of the political art and the political science in which our present generation is so lamentably deficient, and which all who aspire or pretend to be "men of light and leading should re-consult and re-consider."

MR KIPLING DISAPPOINTS

Land and Sea Tales for Scouts and Guides. By Rudyard Kipling. Macmillan. 4s. net.

MATTHEW ARNOLD said that it was impossible to read a certain passage of Macaulay without a cry of pain. That may be as it may. Certainly it is impossible to read any book by Mr. Kipling without a blush. Most of his books, of course, are worth a blush or two. The showiness, the knowingness, the ostentation, the dreadfully artless artfulness, though they are always there, are often rendered invisible by the adjacent blaze of genius, as lesser lights are extinguished by a larger. But when the great fire burns low, the common little twinklings re-assert themselves; and that is why Mr. Kipling, at his worst, is so much worse than one would believe possible of anyone who is at his best so fascinatingly and astonishingly good.

'Land and Sea Tales' must rank, we fear, rather low down in the list of his achievements. It has magic, but not the old magic: it has skill, but not the old skill. And, being meant for boys and girls, it necessarily catches Mr. Kipling at a disadvantage; for boys and girls are precisely the people who of all people on this earth most blush in shame at the showy and the knowing. When he writes for little children, Mr. Kipling is admirable. His artlessness, then, is real. He puts off his own self-consciousness in sympathy with the childish lack of self-consciousness. But the difference between little children and children or a slightly larger growth is enormous, and in no field more enormous than in this, of sensitiveness about emotion. 'Stalky and Co.,' though brilliant, because of the narrative zest and power that inform it, is, as a school story, one of the worst in the language—quite as painfully remote from truth as the 'Eric' which it so assiduously derides. These new 'Land and Sea Tales' again, are full of the two vices most abhorred by boys—talking down and showing off; and we fear that, in consequence, they may be regarded in some quarters with just the feelings with which Stalky and his friends regarded the "jelly-bellied flag-flapper."

We have spoken of magic. Such of it as there is will be found chiefly, we think, in the interspersed poems—for instance:

How do we know, when the port-fog holds us
Moored and helpless, a mile from the pier,
And the week-long summer smother enfolds us—
How do we know it is going to clear?
There is no break in the blindfold weather,
But, one and another, around the bay,
The unseen capstans clink together,
Getting ready to up and away.

The stories, or sketches, present their morals too nakedly. The first, 'Winning the Victoria Cross,' ends:

The Order itself is a personal decoration, and the honour and glory of it belong to the wearer; but he can only win it by forgetting himself, his own honour and glory, and working for something beyond, and outside, and apart from his own self. And there seems to be no other way in which you get anything in this world worth the keeping.

Doubtless this is true. Doubtless it is true that one ought to keep fit, and "to recognize facts, even when

they are unpleasant and inconvenient." But the morals are contradictory when they are not commonplace. Mr. Kipling, here and elsewhere, preaches discipline; also, here and elsewhere, he implies that it is glorious to outwit and befool those in authority. He prints a long and professedly hilarious story of a dreadful child who first tries to commit suicide, and then causes his father any amount of loss and worry, because he has been struck before his nurse. Mr. Kipling appears strongly to approve of beating bad boys: if the child had been one of the "modern" kind, and regarded his "dignity" as offended by a blow, Mr. Kipling would certainly condemn him: but because he talks about his "honour," his morbidity and vengefulness are exalted.

There is a neat tale of the South African War; one of pilotage on the Hugli; one about repairing a broken-down engine; one about flying in "All the Pelungas" (an amusing one, this); one (also amusing) about how a boy scout learned to cook; one about the quietly heroic conduct of soldiers on a burning ship; one about the advantages of learning to shoot with a rifle. There is an inferior 'Stalky' episode, and there are some pleasant reminiscences of school. But there is nothing to show what Mr. Kipling can do when inspired.

MUSSOLINI THE MASTER

Mussolini as Revealed in His Political Speeches, November, 1914 — August, 1923. Selected, translated, and edited by Barone Bernardo Quaranta di San Severino. Dent. 7s. 6d. net.

Understanding Italy. By Clayton Sedgwick Cooper. Illustrated. Long. 15s. net.

MR. COOPER is an intelligent American who presents the Italian frame for the Mussolini picture. He enables foreigners to understand the real background out of which Mussolini arose, and how and why he justly dominates it. Mussolini represents the whole nation, and he has purged it in three years of its Bolshevik poisons and partisan make-believes. He is a revolutionary, not only against the "red demagogue," but also against all the Laodiceans, whether of faithless formula or of selfish treacheries. He has enabled the monarch to be Bolingbroke's "Patriot King." He has restored its soul to the people. He has added will and brain to the strong arms that, without him, would have been weak. He has nearly balanced the financial budget. He has revived industry, and has disciplined it, and has hugely stimulated Italian exports. Commercial treaties are his lever, a willing obedience his power. He has reincarnated ancient Rome. If Mr. Cooper's delineation of Italy's material and spiritual statistics (the last conjunction is Mussolini's own) sometimes approaches the picturesqueness of Baedeker, he shows in his last two chapters that he can write with more artistic effect, though we do not think that Italy's "idealism" has much in common with that of abstract idealogues. But the book deserves to be popular, for it is a real contribution to international understanding.

But from its nature the first of the books before us absorbs our interest, for in it Mussolini himself speaks in his own vibrant voice, thinks with a brain swift as it is sure, acts almost before the words are spoken with the flash of a sword that catches the sun. Not only is he an original and intuitive chief of action, but world history ancient and modern has been mastered and concentrated. We hear him as a thinker, patriot, and national inspirer even from his first socialistic days, when he was never an international or a demagogue. We catch the afflatus that made him pierce through the shams and flimsiness of proletarian theories misused by its manipulators. And when his scorn of all neutralities made him abjure socialisms and urge Italy into the war by inspiring her with her own destiny, we find not only the enthusiast but the strategist bent on subduing his meshed material to his hand and compound-

ing out of it a fine harmonious tissue. He forces events to subserve character.

From the start the Fascists, whom he created from chaos and named after the twined Roman rods, were "of combat," a militant, disciplined, productive force—a "force by consent." Even in 1919, at Milan, he was bold enough to expose the hypocrisy of confusing the Soviet-Socialists (our Labour Party) with the hand-workers. "In the unlikely and absurd event" of their "triumph," he said, "ten of these idiots would be tomorrow the ten Ministers of the Italian Nation."

The Socialist Party is one thing, and the organized mass of working men another, and the disorganised mass yet another and seven times larger than the rest put together.

Even then and ever afterwards he urged the need to "Produce, produce, produce" in every degree of labour, nor would he tolerate the base flatterers of class-democracy.

We must not allow ourselves to approach the working classes in the sometimes unctuous, sometimes theatrical manner of the demagogues. The masses must be educated, and for this reason must have the straight truth . . . We must not present ourselves to the masses as charlatans, promising Paradise . . . but as educators who do not seek either success, popularity, salaries, or votes.

Here is moral courage conjoined with physical, and here once more is something for the Lloyd Georgians to consider.

. . . As regards reaction and revolution, I have a compass in my pocket. . . . All that tends towards making the Italian people great finds me favourable, and—*vice-versa*—all that which tends towards lowering, brutalizing, and imposterizing them finds me opposed.

And how about the Popularists, "who more or less answer to our lukewarm Liberals" . . . ? " . . . The Liberal State is a mask behind which there is no face."

We have no space to examine the great procession of events and pronouncements which led up to the "March on Rome," and the triumph of patriotic and penetrating patriotism with a gaze riveted on the future yet enkindled by the past. No time to consider his appreciations of Cavour and discriminations about Mazzini; none to dwell upon his pet theme of the great dead inspiring their brothers.

In every sense and sphere he is wholesale, not retail. Pass to his pronouncements of last year, when Fascism had grown up and prevailed:

The whole atmosphere [in the past] was made up of half-tones and uncertainty. Well, Fascismo seizes individuals by their necks, and tells them: "You must be what you are. If you are a bourgeois, you must remain such. You must remain proud of your class because it has given a type to the world. . . . If you are a Socialist, you must remain such, although facing the inevitable risk you run in that profession. Here speaks the individualist for all instead of the collectivist for none."

We recommend everyone truly in earnest for England to study these piercing speeches. The longest of them is short. They resound with sincere yet far-reaching statesmanship, fraught with lessons for us all.

A WINTER MANUAL

Snow and Ice Sports. By Elon Jessup. Illustrated. Dent. 7s. 6d. net.

THE joy of winter is something we seldom get in this green, rainy country. We are in hopes, however, that we shall have a little ice and snow this Christmas-tide, for a certain "residential" or oldest inhabitant down in the West Country tells us that all the omens point to a long hard frost after 'Lecture Day. So we may look forward to tobogganing, say, in Derbyshire and skating in the Fens, where you can travel all day on the "drains" and "washes," and, if you have a moustache, hear the traditional bit of chaff half-a-dozen times before sunset: "Here's a chap turned mouldy since he got out o' bed!" Of course, if only you have the time and the money to spare, you can get all the winter sport you want in Switzerland, or,

better still, in Norway or Sweden, where the subtly-irritating artificiality of hotel life at Davos or St. Moritz is agreeably lacking.

Mr. Elon Jessup tells us about the many winter sports which can be practised in the Eastern States or, better still, in Eastern Canada. At first he found more misery than joy in these pursuits; not having solved for himself the problem of wearing the right kind and amount of clothing in the right way. He was obsessed, to his perpetual discomfort, by the delusion that a person has to look like a human mattress in order to keep warm out of doors in zero weather. In the end he discovered what is known to lumber-jacks and winter hunters and all other workers that use the snows as a seaman uses the sea, that a few layers of light clothing are all that are necessary, provided they be chosen wisely. Ventilation and unimpeded circulation are the first and last conditions of comfort in cold weather, and it is because Englishmen are ignorant of this fact that they suffer so much during a long frost. The "stag shirt," which is the Canadian lumber-jack's invention, would be a priceless boon to the shivering townsman if it were only known over here. It is a heavy mackintosh garment with the tails amputated, and should be worn over the ordinary shirt.

Mr. Jessup's book is packed with invaluable hints, the fruit of long experience, on the choice of equipment for winter sports. Americans, as we know, are always improving the implements of games; indeed, they sometimes carry the process a bit too far, as when they substitute a steel ball with mercury inside it for the leaden shot used in putting the weight (we saw these "notions," which add a foot or more to the distance achieved, at the athletic contests last August between representatives of Oxford and Cambridge and of Harvard and Yale), and design a platinum ball-and-wire to take the place of the blacksmith's hammer thrown by our athletic ancestors. Every word Mr. Jessup has to say about skis, snowshoes, and the like is worthy of careful consideration—even by regular visitors to the Swiss winter resorts. Some of the sports he describes are unfamiliar to English holiday-makers, on whom his advice on camping out comfortably in the snows during zero weather will be wasted. Ice fishing is a sport that cannot be practised on this side of the Atlantic so far as we know, except in Finland and Russia. Sailing on skates, however, which is the most bird-like of winter diversions next to ice-yachting or a flight on the perilous Cresta Run, is sometimes tried on the frozen Fens. We have seen sailing outfits on the broad rivers, such as the Hudson, of the Eastern States, which were so elaborate as to make the man (or girl) inside look like a full-rigged sailing vessel. It is rather a dangerous business for those who have not acquired the art of sailing a small boat or do not know that a crack must be taken head-on, not diagonally, and that rough patches of ice must be carefully avoided. A fall when sailing at a speed of thirty to forty miles an hour is apt to be a serious business.

If we have a long, hard frost this year, why not have some self-sailing races on Lingay Fen? "Scootering" is not, of course, a sport which can be tried over here, for it involves the use of a boat on sledge runners which is equally at home on ice and in open water. We have known occasions where such an amphibious craft would have been very useful for wild-fowling on the Norfolk Broads. It originated in the great South Bay of Long Island (an old-settled land of wide, white beaches where Theodore Roosevelt had a summer cottage), which is in winter neither open water nor solid, continuous ice. It was invented so that communication could be kept up between the Long Island mainland and the numerous outlying beaches, which are dotted with life-saving stations. To-day the scooter is a complicated affair, looking like a cubist drawing of a collision between a motor-car and a tiny yacht, and scooter racing on the great South Bay is as permanent and popular an institution as ice-yacht racing in New Jersey and the Middle West. It is wonderful how the queer craft churn, bump, slide,

rumble, and splash along at speeds up to thirty miles an hour.

It is a pity we do not get a regular winter, so that snowshoe meets and mountain circuits on skis can be arranged, as in Mr. Jessup's land of lakes and forests and mountains. But his enthusiastic book will help the reader to get more pleasure than he thinks possible out of a cold spell in this green island of ours.

MR. DRINKWATER'S COLLECTED POEMS

The Collected Poems of John Drinkwater. Two vols. Sidgwick and Jackson. 21s. net.

MR. DRINKWATER belongs to the school of the thoughtful and careful poets, not to that of the lyrical and passionate: to the tradition of Gray rather than to that of Shelley. But Gray was a very good poet; and we confess we are rather tired of hearing Mr. Drinkwater scolded for not being something which he never set out to be. At least he takes his art seriously; and, if the seriousness often seems of the wrong kind, it is yet far preferable to the rather base flippancy with which many young men now set out to climb Parnassus.

Undoubtedly, he is handicapped by the very variety of his talents and inclinations. He tries many manners, and, in those of them in which he fails, must expect to be written off as an imitator. Most poetry is full of echoes; it is only when the echo is more noticeable than the poetry that we complain; but Mr. Drinkwater has an almost fatal habit of writing lines which sound like poetry instead of *being* poetry: lines such as:

These were the proud adventurers of the mind.

The idea is lofty. The language is apt. Yet the total effect is of something missed; and the reader carries away only a horrid suspicion that the poet was himself deceived, mistaking the miss for an achievement. Sonnets such as the one beginning

When they make silly question of my love

are Shakespeare and water—with the Shakespeare left out: nor is it possible to forget Mr. A. E. Housman when we read:

Blue skies are over Cotswold,
And April snows go by,
The lasses turn their ribbons
For April's in the sky.

Mr. Drinkwater comes to earth with a bump (as, for that matter, Tennyson did before him) when he attempts the narrative-colloquial in blank verse:

Why pose about Beethoven and Debussy,
Or these French fellows Degas and Picasso,
When there were Marcus Stone, and A Long, Long Trail,
And A Little Grey Home in the West, that common folk
Could understand?

We could go on finding faults: we prefer to insist on the merits. Mr. Drinkwater is young to have attained to 'Collected Poems' at all; that many of them do not seem worth collecting is comparatively unimportant; what we ought to do is to feel, and confess, gratitude for those that have an imperishable quality. Among all the careful studies and exercises in different methods—the verses, so to speak, of the "literary man"—emerges quite clearly the voice of the poet. Every now and then the dignity of the moralist is put off, and the glory of the prophet is put on: the world is seen. We read of a woman that "the flowing of her body"

Was lovely as a known yet wanted tale.

Is not that a satisfying line? Excellent is the whole poem beginning:

Let none devout forgive my sin
Who have not sinned as I;
The soul immaculate within
Has not to measure by
My sorrowing husbandry.

And "Moonlit Apples" is exquisite:

At the top of the house the apples are laid in rows,
And the skylight lets the moonlight in, and those
Apples are deep-sea apples of green. There goes
A cloud on the moon in the autumn night.

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A mouse in the wainscot scratches, and scratches, and then
There is no sound at the top of the house of men
Or mice; and the cloud is blown, and the moon again
Dapples the apples with deep-sea light.

We wish we had space for the rest of it: it is Mr. Drinkwater at his best. What is the matter with him at his worst is plain; he has told us himself:

The shadows that companion me
From chronicles and poetry,
More constant and substantial are
Than these my men familiar . . .

But what is right with him when he "comes off" is harder to define. It is something so individual that no analogy will help us. There is sensitiveness in it, and austerity; but the essential, of course, is a kindled imagination.

IRISH PERSONALITIES

Irish Indiscretions. By Warre B. Wells. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.

AS a member of the editorial staff of the *Irish Times*, Mr. Wells must have had excellent opportunities of forming a judgment of the leading actors in the drama of the Irish revolution. His description of these people makes a most readable book, in which he sets forth his impressions without extenuation or malice. It should be especially welcome to English readers who like to know that the Irish protagonists in the troubled times of the last decade are, like Mr. Kipling's adventurer, neither gods nor devils, but very human mortals. Mr. Wells has a fortunate gift of characterization; nothing could be better than his sketch of the engaging personality of Tom Kettle, who had "one of those curious minds with a strong Catholic bias, and yet with a puckish kink of irreverence"—much like the hero of the oddly named and chaotic 'Ulysses.' Very characteristic is the author's account of his attempt to persuade the Provost of Trinity to let the staff of the *Irish Times* use a private and comparatively healthy short-cut through the College during the rising of 1916. "Mahaffy could see nothing in the rising but an envious assault of the 'have-nots' on the 'haves,' and was firm in his belief that Pearse aspired to usurp the Provostship of Trinity." One of the best things in the book is Mr. Wells's vivid description of the difficulty of bringing out his paper during the Dublin fighting. Even to-day few English-speaking journalists know what it is like to produce a newspaper in a city "where the crack of rifles, the roar of bursting bombs, the whine and crash of shell-fire, and all the confused uproar of street-fighting replace the normal rumble of street traffic."

There is a good sketch of Mr. de Valera, a "long thin man with sallow and bespectacled face almost melancholy in repose, vivid and intense only when he spoke," who possesses in a high degree "that magic gift of personal magnetism which makes and marks all big political leaders." Mr. Wells sees in him a sort of parallel to President Wilson, with his "element of faith in a Messianic mission" and the "formal and logical mind of the mathematician," a good leader for an insurgent cause, but neither endowed with "the proper temper of the negotiator" nor the "possessor of the constructive mind fitted to play the chief part in building up a settled Ireland."

Equally good within its brief outlines is the sketch of Arthur Griffith, whom Mr. Wells regards as "the authentic maker of modern Ireland," and who was in his public attitude "more like a scientific thinking machine than a man," though the private and personal Griffith was "the most genial of souls, a good talker, one of the widest interests, a very human being." But perhaps Mr. Wells is a little wide of the mark when he describes Griffith as "in a sense the Mazzini of Irish politics," and goes on to say that one of his fundamental principles in political controversy was that "a good lie with a good start can never be overtaken." Not such was the belief of Mazzini.

Mr. Wells gives a good account of the leaders of the remarkable co-operative enterprise which has wrought in Ireland "an economic and social transformation unequalled in any other country"—"Plunkett, its executive mind, who brought to it personal prestige, character, and means; R. A. Anderson, its business man . . . George Russell, its prophet and apostle." The history of the Irish labour movement is succinctly summarized under three names—Larkin, who "made Dublin Labour articulate without being really class-conscious"; Connolly, who "endowed it with a creed"; and Thomas Johnson, who "had the harder task of building up the movement and establishing it on lines of practical progress." We have seen few recent books that give a purely English reader more real help towards a lively envisagement of men and affairs in modern Ireland.

GREEK STUDIES

History of Greek Philosophy, Thales to Democritus.

By B. A. G. Fuller. Cape. 12s. 6d. net.

Poine: a Study in Ancient Greek Blood-vengeance.

By H. J. Treiston. Longmans. 21s. net.

HERE are two studies of ancient Greece with different aims. Dr. Fuller sets out to make early Greek philosophy as easy as possible for the ordinary reader, and Prof. Treiston is frankly learned, following the obscure detail of a complicated subject, which involves conjectural archaeology. The paper cover and first title of Dr. Fuller's book give merely 'History of Greek Philosophy,' but the addition 'Thales to Democritus' is important. Perhaps the author did not like to adopt the obvious title 'Early Greek Philosophy,' because it is that of Prof. Burnet's book, on which he relies extensively. But surely prospective readers should be aware that the book does not get so far as Plato and Aristotle. Dr. Fuller has had experience as an American teacher, and his book is very readable, covering the pill with quite attractive jam, such as an account of a well-attended evening at Aspasia's as a modern reporter might see it. Meditation is not an English habit, and Dr. Fuller's defence of the usefulness of philosophy can lay no great stress on its practical influence over the lives of those that follow it. The early Greek speculators belong to science rather than religion. The combination is quite reasonable to-day, and it may be wondered that we have not more philosophers thus doubly distinguished. The Greek science is now out of date, but sayings like that of Heraclitus, "Character is man's destiny," are as true as ever. The noble verses of Xenophanes would be striking in any age. Why does Dr. Fuller talk of "Johnny Head-in-Air in the 'Slovenly Peter' of our childhood?" Has the nursery classic changed its name in the United States? To that country certainly rather than to our public belongs a mixture of bigotry and panic over new discoveries. Kentucky raves about the wicked doctrines of evolution, but no county in England is so silly.

Prof. Treiston writes with great learning and ability on the Greek ideas of blood-vengeance, which can be discovered in the texts preserved to us. One of the scenes on the Shield of Achilles is the chief authority for early practice. Its language is doubtful, and Homer is so shadowy about the racial questions involved that nobody can speak with certainty. Prof. Treiston sees the Achæans as a dominant warrior class, and the Pelasgians as the group society they conquered. The scene on the shield is a "genuine wer-geld dispute, not within the Achæan caste, but amongst the Pelasgian tribal folk." One man, presumably the murderer, declares that he has paid all, while the other denies that he has received anything. The difficulty is that both appear to have a reasonable case. Prof. Treiston suggests that the payment was tribal, that the murderer had paid his due, but others of his tribe had not, while the accuser had not received himself anything of the fine handed to his tribe. This does not

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sound very satisfactory, but, at least, it offers a solution of the situation that has to be faced in the text. The Achæan warrior class had no wergeld, and dealt in the grim old Scotch way of "justifying," taking blood for blood. In the period of Hesiod, of which we know very little, the Professor supposes barbarous vendettas, modified about 700 B.C. by the rise of the Greek state and the Apolline idea of the purgation of the polluted murderer. He follows through the Greek drama in detail, the plays which deal with Homeric stories affording the best material for significant conclusions. Much is doubtful, for we do not know how far the personal bias of the dramatist, his knowledge of earlier practices, or his conception of a well-made play contributed to his exposition. Prof. Treston is ingenious and reasonable in his conclusions, and while we do not always agree with his reading of the scanty evidence, we recognise the width and learning of his survey, and have read it with great interest. He has the German industry, but not the German stolidity, or insensitiveness to the claims of poetry and literature.

TRADE WITH THE MOGULS

From Akbar to Aurangzeb. By W. H. Moreland. Macmillan. 15s. net.

AN important service to Indian history has been rendered by Mr. Moreland in this erudite and carefully arranged book, which follows on his monumental 'India at the Death of Akbar,' and deals with economic developments of considerably greater interest to European readers. The value of the book is greatly enhanced by the use which Mr. Moreland has made of the hitherto almost entirely neglected early Dutch records. The importance of this Dutch material is two-fold. In the first place, the higher Dutch authorities demanded of their subordinates, and particularly from those at the remoter trading stations, accounts of transactions far more detailed and precise than those with which the British East India Company was usually content. In the second place, reference to the Dutch archives considerably modifies our view of the early British traders as men engaged in enterprises without precedent and obliged to improvise almost all the machinery of commerce and of political negotiations with Oriental potentates. It was the Dutch, and not the British, who succeeded the Portuguese in the command of the Indian Ocean; and for little short of a century it was the Dutch who had the major share of east-borne commerce in India. The British, in fact, were far more frequently than has hitherto been realized followers, for good or evil, of precedents set by the Dutch. There is a certain satisfaction, however, in noting that the British refrained from imitating their Dutch predecessors in one branch of commerce—the slave trade, in which the Dutch during this period were very active, with a view to meeting their needs for labour further east, whereas the British, having little or no Asiatic territory to develop, were spared a similar temptation.

Mr. Moreland's book naturally throws a great deal of light, not only on European enterprise in India, but on the Indian administrative and fiscal systems of the seventeenth century. It shows us once more how severe a restricting influence was exercised on trade by the duties on internal transit of goods. Thus as early as 1615 we find the British complaining that three separate duties were collected on goods brought from Ahmadabad to Surat for export; and though the agreement made at Surat in 1642 provided that no land customs should be demanded at places belonging to the Mogul Emperor, such duties were nevertheless collected at various places during the next quarter of a century. This multiplicity of imposts uncertain in their incidence made every trading venture a gamble, for it was impossible to forecast the amount of duty to which any particular consignment of goods would be liable. The administrative peculiarity of India which pressed

most hardly on commerce was, perhaps, the system of farming out public office, which prevailed in the 17th century everywhere in the south of India and was gaining ground also in the Mogul Empire, though Akbar had earlier made vigorous attempts to establish the practice of paying official salaries in cash and holding officials responsible for the entire revenue collected by them.

We have no space to summarize Mr. Moreland's criticism of Mogul and other Indian systems, but we must at least indicate the nature of his verdict on the development of Indian commerce in the seventeenth century. He admits what it would indeed be difficult to deny, the benefit which some localities, some classes of the population, some products had from the new external facilities introduced by the Portuguese, Dutch and British, but he holds that on the whole the country was impoverished by the operation of internal forces. Growers of indigo, silk weavers, exporters of saltpetre and some others benefited substantially as the result of European intervention, but especially in the north, where Akbar's successors increased their direct demands on production unreasonably, there was a general decline in the prosperity of the people. Under the Emperor Shahjahan it would seem that the bulk of the population was reduced to the verge of destitution, while part of the irregular bureaucracy enjoyed enormous gains, and in view of the Mogul practice of confiscating private property on the death of the possessor, spent its money recklessly. A number of causes that cannot here be enumerated forced down the peasant's earnings, while the urban population, then composed very largely of parasites, had food supplies often below cost of production.

THE THIRD MR. CONRAD

The Rover. By Joseph Conrad. Fisher Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.

TO the Mr. Conrad of 'Lord Jim' and the Mr. Conrad of 'The Secret Agent' must now be added a third. The other two, between whom there was some small resemblance of method and a considerable resemblance of style, had achieved many successes; but only their most passionate admirers (comparable to those Wordsworthians who prefer 'The Idiot Boy' to the great Ode) would claim that both of them were always at the height of their own achievement. With characteristically ample courage, a third Mr. Conrad arises, accompanied by the Napoleonic Wars. The gesture with which he evokes Nelson, only to make nothing of him, is indeed almost too magnificent. No doubt Mr. Conrad discards from strength; no doubt it is all part of his tranquil and twilight scheme to allow no single figure to tower up at the end. All the same, one feels a flicker of irrational disappointment.

Tranquil and twilight? But here, in the neighbourhood of Toulon in the early years of last century, we find blockade and violence; a lowering, cringing monomaniac, sodden with the blood of the recent Terror; a girl out of her mind with the memory of that bloodshed; a landing party; hand-to-hand struggles; and a sallying out to certain death. Tranquil and twilight? Yes: for, despite all the fears and adventures, the atmosphere is one of detachment and spiritual repose. All that happens is like the echo of former wrath, or a shadow contrasted with it. The hero is a rover, a sailor: but "home is the sailor, home from the sea," to end his days in quiet. Actually he ends them in no quiet: actually he goes to sea again for one last and most perilous escapade. But even about that he goes quietly; and, until the time for that comes, he overbroods the restlessness, suspicions, loves and insanities of others with the noble calm which he has brought back from excess of danger and endeavour. He has been a pirate, a slave, a "Brother of the Coast"; he has spent a long life, acquiescently, among blood and

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rapine; and he comes, in the evening of his days, to settle in a France which has just passed through a nightmare of carnage, but which does not impress him any the more for that. The contrast is in Mr. Conrad's best vein of implied and restrained irony: it is superb. But we doubt whether the book as a whole will rank with its author's best. It is very good indeed, only not quite as good as that. There are, for one thing, some patches of awkward ineffectual writing; there is no complete triumph of the pervading wisdom which raised 'Lord Jim' to the height of tragedy. But there is, nevertheless, that strange impressiveness, that sense of a romantic but remorseless vision, which is so essential a part of the Conrad method. How surely and easily is the note of doubt, of watchfulness, of haunting trouble, struck!—

The Mediterranean, in that part which could be seen from the door of the café, was as empty of all sail as a yet undiscovered sea. The dull tinkle of a cracked bell on the neck of some wandering cow was the only sound that reached him, accentuating the Sunday peace of the farm. Two goats were lying down on the western slope of the hill. It all had a very reassuring effect, and the anxious expression on Peyrol's face was passing away when suddenly one of the goats leaped to its feet. The rover gave a start, and became rigid in a pose of tense apprehension. A man who is in such a frame of mind that a leaping goat makes him start cannot be happy.

The most moving thing in the book, however, is the love that recalls Arlette's wandering wits, and re-creates for her a soul. The object of her love is scarcely, at the first, more human than herself. Wild, lonely, detached by hard fate from kindly interchange of affection, he is drawn to the unhappy girl—torn from her by the agonising summons of duty—and restored by the calmly heroic intervention of the rover, whose own emotions are most delicately hinted and revealed.

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As it is, his ambition outruns his material. For his facts, he relies almost exclusively on Keyser's 'List of Buildings in Great Britain having Mural Decorations'; an admirable work, but one that needs supplementing by intensive first-hand study, which Mr. Kendon rarely attempts. This he makes the basis of a statistical investigation into the relative frequency with which various subjects appear on the walls of English churches, and the results he seeks to interpret with the help of Didron, Mâle, and such compilations as Mirk's *Festial*. His conclusion is that popular sentiment was the determining factor, both in choice of subject and mode of representation. Unfortunately, the matter is not as simple as Mr. Kendon would have it. His deductions are, in the first place, vitiated by faults in his facts. For example, certain kinds of paintings, notably those connected with the Virgin, were specially the victims of iconoclastic fervour; so that counting surviving heads is no safe way of estimating relative importance in the past. Again, two peculiarly English themes, the Apocalypse and Christ as a man of the people surrounded by a glory composed of the tools of labour, are not even mentioned. Nor does treatment compensate for such deficiencies as these. The Middle

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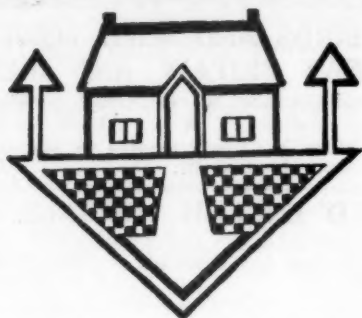
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He felt her body, stiffened with repugnance, struggling, outraged, and longed to shake her into submission, as he could have shaken a small, rebellious animal. Then, though he still held her, he had, inexplicably, an odd and baffling sense of holding nothing at all. All that was woman and personality seemed to have dissolved for him into something finer than wood-ashes. As if under supernatural control, he had a ridiculous vision of a visiting-card, suspended in mid-air, with the words "Mrs. Silvester Carew" neatly engraved on it. His arms slackened. He felt benumbed.

Diana, freed, leaned forward and rapped on the glass, but the chauffeur did not hear her. Pieters was appalled at what he had done, the futility of it.

"How could I help it when you looked at me like that!" he cried, defiantly.

Diana kept on rapping.

"I loved you," cried Pieters again. "I wanted —" He was sweating with rage and shame.

"You've never existed for me," Diana said, icily.

The chauffeur, aware at last of the rapping, presented to them a fleshless, bird-like profile and an attentive red ear.

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There is nothing hackneyed about Mr. Powys. To him the meanest flower that blows can give thoughts which it is almost a euphemism to call melancholy. He appears to start from the assumption that everything is nasty; lust, greed, lies are his constant theme, and if he introduces goodness it is to show it as vacuous and imbecile. His attitude can best be illustrated by the casual assumption of what is likely to give the human animal pleasure:

The bird fluttered upon the ground in agony; it had been hit everywhere by the little, piercing, wounding shots.

Mr. Morsay and Mr. Told watched the seagull flopping about and soiling its splendid wings with the clay sod.

"Another of them flying birds" was Mr. Told's comment.

The Clerk was pleased, too, and began to feel better.

There is surely something very cheap about this sort of cynicism. The corruption of man's heart is a fact, but it is not the only fact. Mr. Powys—whose 'The Left Leg' will be remembered—has humour, imagination, and narrative skill. But he is already, in his second book, threatening to become monotonous. It would be a pity if his reputation were left with only 'The Left Leg' to stand on; certainly 'Black Bryony' will not help it. What is wrong can be tested by a very simple comparison. Children playing inspire him to remark: "Where the children played the gentle summer air was filled with ugly, unseemly words." They inspired Blake to say:—

When the voices of children are heard on the green,
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast,
And everything else is still.

It is true that they also inspired him, in a different mood, to say:—

Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
And the dews of night arise;
Your spring and your day are wasted in play,
And your winter and night in disguise.

But the point is that what Blake says, in either mood, is *the* truth, while what Mr. Powys says is only *a* truth. It is the difference between art and propaganda.

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Stock Market Letter

Stock Exchange, Thursday Morning

THE results of the General Election may make all the difference, of course, but, writing on the polling-day, it may be said that the House is in a light-hearted frame of mind, and that politics are not expected to upset prices to any marked extent. Members look for a sufficient number of election results to be declared by Friday afternoon for them to arrive at some sort of conclusion in regard to the probable outcome of the contest. The price of Majorities, since dealings in them started, has ranged from 45 to 30, and at the time of writing—I have just checked it in the market—it is called 36. Most Stock Exchange people agree that a majority of anything under 40 will not be of much use to the Unionist party, having regard to the fact that it is not entirely united. Some men, professed politicians, go so far as to say that unless the Unionists secure a majority of 60 over all other parties, it will ensure another General Election being held within a comparatively short space of time.

* * *

This is, of course, the one thing which the House would abhor more than any other. There has been quiet selling of the War Loan and of Conversion stock on behalf of people who wanted to hedge against unexpected happenings in the result of the election. They argue that, if a Unionist majority should materialize, and, as a consequence, prices go up, the loss which they would cut upon closing their bear obligations would be fully compensated by the better conditions thereby opened to them in their own business. *Per contra*, if the Labour Party does unexpectedly well, prices would doubtless give way, and so enable them to secure a profit on repurchasing their stock, which profit could be set off against any loss that might befall them as a result of the election. As all these doubts will be resolved within the course of the next day or two, there is no use in dwelling upon them, except as a record to show the attitude of a good many business men, not only in the City, but throughout the provinces as well.

* * *

Such a rise in tin as the last few weeks have witnessed is in itself a red lamp to those who see in so violent a jump the possibility of an equally abrupt plunge in the opposite direction, if speculators in the metal should rush to take their profits. This is the reason why tin shares—Malayan, Cornish, and West African—have responded but tardily to the surprising boom in the price of the metal itself. Nevertheless, it has the effect of directing attention to the good dividend-payers, such, for instance, as those to be found in the Middle East group. Gopeng has paid 3s. per share dividends this year, and the price is a little under £2. Ipoh distributed 6d. in July, and another 9d. will be paid this month: the price of the shares is 18s. 6d. The Malayan Tin Dredging, one of the best known, the price of whose shares stands at 43s., has paid 3s. per share, and Siamese Tin, another popular favourite, priced at 54s. 6d., has returned its shareholders 5s. already this year. Sungei Besi, rather neglected so far at 35s., has declared three dividends of 1s. each in 1923, and there should be another distribution, of the same amount, announced during the next few weeks. The company has a long life: in some quarters it is estimated at a hundred years. The mine is doing well, its monthly returns of tin being consistently good and its capital the small one of £111,407. The shares are desirable from the point of view of the speculative investor who is prepared to take a good rate of interest on his money and to await appreciation in the price of his shares.

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Acrostics

PUBLISHERS' PRIZE

For the Acrostic Competition there is a weekly prize:—A Book (selected by the competitor) reviewed in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the problem was set.

RULES

1.—The price of the book chosen must not exceed a guinea; it must be named by the solver when he sends his solution, and be published by a firm whose name is on the following list:

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2.—The coupon for the week must be enclosed.

3.—Envelopes must be marked "Competition," and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9, King Street, London, W.C. 2.

Competitors not complying with these Rules will be disqualified.

Awards of Prizes.—When solutions are of equal merit, the result will be decided by lot.

Under penalty of disqualification, competitors must intimate their choice of book when sending solutions, which must reach us not later than the Friday following publication.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 92.

PENNED BY THAT WIZARD OF THE NORTH, SIR WALTER;
ONCE MUCH ESTEEMED.—"BUT NOW?"—MEN'S STANDARDS ALTER!

1. Hailed as first father by the German race.
2. The courtly Dean forebore to name that place.
2. By bards, not ghosts, this séance is frequented.
4. A traitor son with bitter tears lamented.
5. Lop head and tail of bird beloved by Dane.
6. In Nelson's golden days she ruled the main.
7. 'Twas I that caused of images this dearth.
8. When spring is gone, that note may have some worth.
9. This you will find, friend, if a bee should sting you,
10. Light 10, which in a bottle now I bring you.
11. Its *raison d'être*? Why, just to strike the ball.
12. We must behead him, though he is so small.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 90.

ACROSTIC NINETY: WHO TO SOLVE IT DEIGNS,
TWO LATIN PRECEPTS WILL REWARD HIS PAINS.

1. Atrocious! Infamous! Cut off two-thirds.
2. To reprehend in fierce and furious words.
3. Old Titan now has reached it in his course.
4. Of sounds mellifluous, cacophonous source.
5. Lop at both ends of southern hills a chain.
6. Brings death to luckless travellers on the main.
7. A little island, once a great man's prison.
8. Such is his act who steals what isn't hisn.
9. A whetstone for the wits we this may call.
10. Order and neatness touch him not at all.
11. 'Tis what this light's solution you may find.
12. An epoch we've left very far behind.

The solution to Acrostic No. 90 is unavoidably held over.

ACROSTIC No. 90.—The winner is Lady Suffield, Gunton Park, Norwich, who has chosen as her prize 'The Trefoil,' by A. C. Benson, published by Murray, and reviewed in our columns on November 24. Thirty-five other competitors named this book, twenty-seven asked for 'The Owls' House,' fifteen for 'Word of the Earth,' &c., &c.

ALSO CORRECT: John Lennie, J. B. Dick, Margaret, Trike, N. O. Sellam, Varach, A. R. N. Cowper-Coles, F. I. Morcom, Carickle, A. M. F., D. Barnard, Pelican, and Still Waters.

ONE LIGHT WRONG: Martha, Baitho, St. Ives, B. Alder, K. A. Jones, Mrs. D. Leete, Boskerris, Merton, Doric, Trelaw, Quis, Jurgen, Joan Fearis, Eyhil, E. D. C. Saunders, Lilian, Snabo, Boryke, Gay, Stellenbosch, Glossex, P. Cooper, M. Kingsford, Albert E. K. Wherry, A. de V. Blathwayt, Old Mancunian, P. Gordon Williams, Diamond, Vic. W. Sydney Price, Wang, Barberry, C. E. P., Carlton, Tallow, Shorne Hill, Oakapple, and Dolmar.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG: J. Chambers, Corbridge, M. Story, Pite, May North, Reid, Mrs. J. Butler, Rupert Deakin, C. R. Price, G. T., Caradoc, Arthur Mills, Felix, A. Riley, Lady Duke, Puss, C. J. Warden, Ludus, Met, Iago, and Igidie.

Light 11 was the most difficult. To solvers who gave "Unexplicit" I would point out that what was wanted was a word applying not to the Light, but to its *Solution*. For Light 8 Immoral is accepted. Light 4: Cat is by no means a cacophonous or harsh-sounding word, but Catgut is.

For Light 10 Slattern cannot be accepted; Slattern and Slut are the *feminine* of Sloven. As for Slubberdegullion, that elegant word means "a dirty, mean wretch," not an untidy man.

BAITHO.—I cannot assume our solvers to be familiar with delightful old Roger Ascham, and I am afraid that since his time most schoolmasters have used quite other whetstones than Praise to sharpen their pupils' wits. Did not Dr. Johnson frankly advocate flogging as preferable? (Shakespeare, by the way, says that "the dulness of the fool is the whetstone of the wits.")

CARLTON.—It was duly credited to you, but did not affect the result. Thanks for your previous note.

M. H. B.—Would it not in their case be called Braying?

MERTON.—The solution was Unapparent, but would there be any sense in saying it was Unlit?


BOSKERRIS.—I had to indicate that Latin phrases were required. Everyone knows that *Nosce teipsum* is a translation from the Greek, but you will find it in most lists of Latin quotations. "Our English Bible" is a common phrase, though multitudes of people are aware that the Scriptures were not originally written in that language.

MRS. KELSALL.—Letter received, but solution seems to have been omitted.

TWO SOLVERS.—Too late to alter now, or I would try to oblige you.

G. S. W.—Devoting so much thought and research to these trifles, you will surely succeed before long.

NO. 89.—One Light wrong: Stonehurst.



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The 26th ordinary general meeting of Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Co., Ltd., was held on the 3rd inst. at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, W.C., Senatore G. Marconi, G.C.V.O., LL.D., D.Sc. (the chairman), presiding.

The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, first dealt with the items appearing in the balance sheet and profit and loss account, and stated that, after making the necessary allowances for depreciation, etc., the profit for the year under review was £302,948, which showed an increase of some £27,000 over that of the preceding year. Whilst this result could not be looked upon as in any way satisfactory in normal times, he thought in existing conditions it would not have been very surprising had it been far less favourable. The company had suffered no small injury in consequence of the powers given to Government Departments under the Patents and Designs Act, and the board were of opinion that every year since the war some payment—and, they thought, a not unimportant one—should have been made to the company. Their expenditure upon research and experiment ran into tens of thousands of pounds each year, and the board felt that a substantial part of that expenditure, at least, should be recovered by the company for the benefit which the nation enjoyed through Government use of their work and expenditure.

Many new patents, which he believed to be of great value to the company, had been taken out, or applied for, and last summer he was able to carry out important tests with what might rightly be considered an entirely new system of long-distance communication, which he believed was destined to bring about somewhat of a revolution in the methods hitherto employed for communication by wireless with distant countries.

In conclusion, the Chairman referred to circulars issued by Mr. J. W. Hamilton, whose interest in the company, he said, was represented by the holding of two shares, and who was at one time in the service of the company. The charges made therein were baseless.

Mr. Godfrey C. Isaacs (deputy-chairman and managing director), in seconding the resolution, said that the shareholders would be anxious to know where the company stood with regard to its claim against the several Government Departments. After making every possible effort since the last meeting to obtain the necessary information to allow of their proceeding to a settlement, but having failed to get a step further, he finally appealed to the Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin. He was pleased to say that this resulted in very prompt action. A letter was received from Sir William Joynson-Hicks, who was then Financial Secretary at the Treasury, informing him that they were now ready to press forward with arbitration, and expressing his willingness to agree to accept Lord Buckmaster as arbitrator, with full powers to settle all questions in dispute between the company and the three Departments—the War Office, the Admiralty and the Air Ministry. (Applause.) To this proposal the company had agreed, and he (the speaker) had suggested that the matters relating to claims in respect of the Post Office should be similarly dealt with. There remained to be settled the terms of reference, in respect of which he had met and corresponded with Mr. Neville Chamberlain. He had hoped to have been in a position to say that all matters in connection with the terms of reference had been agreed to, and he thought that this would have been the case had it not been that Mr. Neville Chamberlain's time was so much taken up at the present moment with the election. He had every hope, however, that this would occasion them but very short delay.

The directors felt confident that they would soon be able to inform the shareholders that the agreement with the Post Office had been completed.

A resolution was passed to the effect that Mr. J. W. Hamilton be not heard, and expressing unabated and entire confidence in the chairman, the managing director, the directors, solicitors, and auditors of the company.

Mr. Hamilton made repeated attempts to address the meeting, but was refused a hearing.

The report and accounts were adopted by an overwhelming majority.



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Round the Library Table

A MISCELLANY

THE success of the Nonesuch Press in selling off to the public the whole of its production for the year is one on which it is to be congratulated. Among the seven the one which is of most value is the edition of 'The Complete Works of William Congreve' in four volumes (825 copies at three guineas and 75 at six). Booksellers are now charging £4 for the set, and the price will probably rise, as the book is really cheap at the price. There has been no edition claiming completeness since the end of the eighteenth century, and the 'Mermaid' selection only provoked interest in what it omitted, while the poems have only been available in Chalmers. The editor, the Rev. Montague Summers, and the publishers have produced a fine readable book, which was badly wanted. All the same, I would caution those who buy books, not to read them but as a speculation, not to indulge in exaggerated hopes. They would do better to put their money in Saving Certificates. One of our leading book-auctioneers recently told me that he only knew of one man who had done well in this kind of speculation. After spending over a thousand pounds in buying from booksellers he sold the lot at a price which, after paying auction fees, left him five pounds gain. I should think it extremely unlikely that the Nonesuch Press deliberately issue their books at less than their market value.

I wonder how many people have read 'Melmoth the Wanderer,' or could say what the story is. Yet it is undoubtedly one of the typical books in our literature the best of its class—the stories of suspense and terror. A Finnish student, Mr. Niilo Idman, has just published a study of its author, 'Charles Robert Maturin: His Life and Works' (Constable, 7s. 6d. net), which may, perhaps, direct some attention to him. I see the London Library has only editions of his play, 'Bertram' and of 'Melmoth,' and this latter was reprinted in 1892. It seems strange that a writer who was read by and influenced such men as Balzac, Hugo, De Vigny, Baudelaire, Poe and Rossetti should be totally neglected today. Mr. Idman has been able to use a great deal of material hitherto unpublished, and to get the correct date for Maturin's birth. He gives very full summaries and extracts of each of Maturin's works, and has evidently spared no pains in the attempt to show his relation to the literature of the time. As Maturin can neither be reprinted complete nor be properly represented by extracts, Mr. Idman's book has a distinct and lasting value.

Jane Austen was writing at the same time as Maturin, and though it is not true that "a young girl is invariably the heroine of a novel by Jane Austen," as Mlle. Villard is made to say by her translator, yet we can re-arrange the sentence "the heroine of a novel by Jane Austen is invariably a young girl" and find ourselves in a world apart from the mysterious stranger with burning eyes who had dominated fiction up to then. 'Jane Austen,' by Léonie Villard, is a translation of a work which has received a prize, in its French form, from the British Academy, and it is prefaced by 'A New Study of Jane Austen,' by Mr. R. Brimley Johnson (Routledge, 10s. 6d. net). I should advise the reader to get the French form if possible; a certain inexperience, of which the first lines quoted above are

an example, makes the English very difficult and choppy reading, and Mr. Johnson's style is little better. It is always worth while to study the ease of your reader.

Another contemporary of Maturin—Lord Byron—is to be published this week in a form which makes the 'Poems of Lord Byron' (Chatto and Windus, 21s. net) the most desirable volume I have seen for a long time. The edition is printed in the type designed by the late Mr. H. P. Horne, and is prefaced with an introductory essay by Prof. H. J. C. Grierson, who has arranged the poems in chronological order.

I have been reading with much attention 'Marcel Proust: An English Tribute' (Chatto and Windus, 6s. net), edited by Mr. Scott Moncrieff, and am sorry that I cannot agree with the thesis tacitly assumed by most of the contributors that Proust was a great writer. As regards style, he must be judged by the canons of French style, and I would defy anyone to show me in any standard author sentences of such appalling length and complexity as are common in Proust's earlier volumes. I don't know whether he got it from Ruskin or not, but certainly he never attains Ruskin's rhythm. Mr. Clive Bell puts down the French disapproval of Proust to politics, and someone else quotes Anatole France's opinion of him (written before 'Swann' appeared), but the plain fact is that he is more difficult to read in French than in Mr. Moncrieff's miraculous translation. For matter, English literature has canons of its own, and the sorrows of a pederast are not, and in spite of Mr. Clive Bell I hope never will be, thought to be a fit subject for more than half of a man's output. Even Petronius makes them ridiculous. I shall be curious to see the reception which Mr. Moncrieff's version of 'Sodome et Gomorrhe' will receive when, if ever, it appears. Unquestionably Proust, though not a great writer, was a genius. It is curious that nearly every one in the book compares him to Stendhal, who is one of the fashions of literary France ten years ago which has now crossed the Channel. Mr. Saintsbury, as usual, says the illuminating and just thing: "Has anybody said that he partakes both of De Quincey and of Stendhal? He does to me, and I'm shot if I ever expected to see such a blend!" This is of the 'Swann' volume only: I should like to have a similar judgment of the later ones. Mr. W. J. Turner adds a footnote to Mr. Dyneley Hussey's paper which was first given to readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW by letting us know that the phrase that haunted Swann was from a Saint-Saëns violin sonata!

Mr. Ivor Brown has written a little study of 'H. G. Wells' (Nisbet, 2s. net), for a series called 'Writers of the Day.' He is a whole-hearted admirer of his subject, and gives a good account of what Mr. Wells has done, and more or less why he did it. It is not part of his plan to emphasize the weak places of his author, but I cannot help feeling that if 'Ann Veronica' and 'The New Machiavelli' and parts of 'Boon' were wiped out of existence his reputation would be greatly enhanced. As for "writing," fortunately Mr. Wells's place in our estimation does not depend on that.

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